

**STUDIES ON
GURU GRANTH SAHIB**

Editor
DR. BALWANT SINGH DHILLON



Guru Nanak Dev University
Amritsar

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Preface

Guru Granth Sahib is a unique scripture that imparts the message of love, brotherhood and service. It explicates the natural way (*sahaj*) of attaining the Ultimate Truth by living the life of a householder. The world is not an illusion but a reality and to live in it is significant. That is why, Guru Granth Sahib lays emphasis on the truthful living besides recognizing the greatness of Truth. It is perhaps the only scripture in the world that contains the compositions of various Bhagats along with the bani of the Sikh Gurus. The simple but deep and practical message of Guru Granth has attracted the scholars' attention working in the Universities of the world. Their explorations have brought out the richness of the teachings, eloquence of the poetry and the relevance of the message. The theme of co-existence and inter-faith dialogue propounded by Guru Granth Sahib is very significant and has a universal appeal.

It is a matter of great honour that the quadricentennial celebrations of the installation of the Sacred Scripture are being celebrated the world over. As an institution named after Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith, it is our duty to contribute to the celebrations in a meaningful manner. The University had decided to bring out a series of books containing the studies of various scholars on the subject. The objective is to disseminate the rich message of Guru Granth keeping in mind the present scenario when intolerance in the name of religion is widely prevalent.

The present volume in the series contains papers by various scholars of repute which cover the various aspects of Guru Granth Sahib. Dr. Balwant Singh Dhillon, editor of this volume has edited these papers for the benefit of the scholars interested in the Sikh studies. I am sure the readers will find this volume very helpful to understand the message of Guru Granth Sahib.

(S.P.Singh)
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Introductory Note

The 400th anniversary of installation of the Sikh scripture in the Harimandir at Amritsar is going to fall on Sept., 1, 2004. It is one of the most solemn occasions in the Sikh history and would be celebrated all over the world with religious zeal and fervour. It is expected, this would provide a fresh impetus to the studies on *Guru Granth Sahib*. A close examination of the research works on the Sikh text reveals that fairly a good number of books and articles have been produced by the academia working in the various institutions and universities. They have enriched our knowledge of the Sikh scripture to a great extent. The *Journal of Sikh Studies*, the research organ of the Deptt. of Guru Nanak Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar since its inception in 1975 has remained the most sought after Forum for the scholars to publish their findings on various aspects of the Sikh scripture. These articles which appeared from time to time in the Journal are the result of mature scholarship. The authors of these articles, of whom some are no more in this world, have covered a wide range of topics on the Sikh scripture. Most of the articles included in the present study have appeared in the various issues of the Journal. For the benefit of the scholars and readers and moreover to participate in the quadri centennial celebrations of the installation of the Sikh scripture, we have selected a few articles which cover the areas relating to its origin, compilation, canonization, theology, philosophy, language, style, translation and transliteration.

Dr. Balwant Singh Dhillon in his paper seeks to explain the origin, preservation and transmission of *Gurbani* in the pre-*Adi Granth* period. He describes in detail the various modes, methods and traditions that had come to exist to transmit *Gurbani* in early Sikhism. He points out that besides the main Sikh tradition other

rival traditions of *bani* were also current among the Sikhs of various hues. He concludes that canonization of Sikh scripture was the result of half a century long process whereby only those writings that had been proved authentic were elevated to the status of *sachi-bani* to play a decisive role in the formation of the Sikh scripture. He emphasizes that the canonization of the Sikh scripture should not be looked upon as a later development related to the fifth Master alone but it was an ongoing process, co-extensive with the pontification of his predecessors as well.

Dr. Mohinder Kaur Gill in her paper 'Numerals in the *Guru Granth*' highlights one of the important features of the sacred text which is related to the use of numbers. She is absolutely right that to check any infiltration by spurious and unauthorized verses into the corpus of hymns the system of numerology has been brought in the Sikh scripture. She unfolds numerological pattern of the *Guru Granth Sahib* and concludes that Guru Arjan had the vision and foresight to still any future interference with the sacred text through the simple device of numbering all the compositions included by him in the sacred Granth. This device had helped to preserve the authentic text and consequently any effort to temper with it had been thwarted forever.

Prof. Gurbhagat Singh in his paper 'Sikh Consciousness, *Gurbani*, Western Aesthetics' highlights that Gurbani is a special genre and it is beyond the experience of western aesthetics. He explains that many occurrences have shaped Sikh consciousness yet the greatest single occurrence is *Gurbani*, the word (*sabad*) uttered by the Sikh Gurus and Bhagats included in the *Guru Granth*. Though it is possible to enumerate a few common characteristics of the entire language of the *Guru Granth* yet the *jyoti* (consciousness) of all the Gurus was the same. The quality of the Guru-word (*Gurbani*) is oneness, an absolute unity of the signifier and the signified. It is close but not equivalent to the Judaeo-Christian idea of sacred which accepts separation from the profane. The author in his incisive way describes that the authentic consciousness of the

Sikhs stems from a neuro-physiology deepened by *Gurbani*. The Gurus and the Bhagats possessed a holistic visions thus their bani is physical as well as metaphysical at the same time. The learned author points out that the western poetics deals with the imaginative word and thus it is not a good tool either to appreciate or fathom the Guru word.

Dr. Atamjit Singh in his paper presents 'Stylistic Analysis of the Sikh scripture. For this purpose he has taken three hymns from *Aandu* of Guru Amar Das. He points out that the hymns in question offer verbal discourse of medieval period to us, which is basically holistic. In order to understand the nature of discourse available to us through bani we have to focus our attention on the system in which such verbal structures are inscribed. He points out that stylistic analysis can be made on three successive levels: that of connecting links in the language, that of lexicon as such and that of motif. Besides posing a few problems in the context of the study of bani which overlap the textual domain, he finds that it attempts to charter the course of a journey from this worldly to the transcendent world of the otherness. This journey progressively turns one away from one's biological being and in this process achieves the state of perfection. In the journey of bani the linguistic devices become more refined because they refer more to the soul than body.

Prof. Pritam Singh in his paper 'Transliteration of *Guru Granth Sahib* into Devanagari Script' points out that normally transliteration is a much less exacting exercise than translation. He feels that where the text happens to be sacred it is natural to give more attention to the preliminaries to obviate any possibility of error. He describes that the transliterations of the *Guru Granth Sahib* brought out by various scholars and institutions have followed the simplistic rule of replacing *Gurmukhi* orthographic symbols with their Devanagari counterparts which cause immense confusion to the readers of latter script. He underlines the various pitfalls that may occur in any future work of this nature. He emphasises that retention of all the medieval

characteristics of *Gurmukhi* orthography in Devanagari can not but come into clash with its present day orthographic style. Furthermore adherence to the pronunciation may also prove ticklish. He underlies the salient points that have to be kept in mind and towards the end provides a specimen of the transliteration that may be taken as a starting point by any conscientious translator of the sacred text into Devanagari.

Dr. Nazer Singh inquires into the motive of British intelligence network for studying the Sikh Scripture. He says though John Leyden, H.T. Colebrooke and John Carey were adept in the use of the Sikh literature, yet it was John Malcolm who understood the importance of the *Guru Granth* in the Sikh way of life. Therefore, he came to the conclusion that Company regime should learn more about the Sikh religion. After 1857, Robert N. Cust in association with Pro-evangelist Punjab officials such as John Lawrence and D.F. McLeod conceived the idea of translation of the Sikh Scripture. Both Cust and McLeod were critical of Trumpp's method, as he could not conceal the evangelical nature of his work. Thus, translation of the Sikh scripture was a part of political as well as evangelical agenda on the part of British officials.

Dr. J.S.Grewal studies Ernest Trumpp's translation of the *Japuji* in order to analyse his approach to the *Guru Granth*. He says, to start with Trumpp adopted an egoistic attitude to feel that he knew more about the meaning of the *Guru Granth* than those revered for their knowledge of the holy book Prof. Grewal remarks that Trumpp assumed that Sikhs were part of the Hindus and their religion will soon belong to history. He finds serious lapses in Trumpp's translation as he aimed at literal translation but failed to get at the meaning of the words and phrases. He concludes that the basic relevance of Trumpp's work is for the historiography of Sikh Studies.

Dr. Madanjit Kaur presents a documentary evidence of the Sikh reaction to Trumpp's translation of the *Guru Granth*. The document in question which is preserved in Victoria and Albert

Museum, London, bears a testimony to the fact that English translation by Trumpp was the outcome of planned scheme executed by the India office, London. The criticism of Trumpp's work by the contemporary representative bodies of the Sikhs reflects their concern for the future of Sikh community.

Prof. Taran Singh examines the influence of the *Mul-Mantra* on *Gurbani* and finds that the originality of the Sikh philosophy lies in the integrate form of the *Mul-Mantra*. He says it has seven distinct parts and each of them has two distinct aspects, the transcendent and the immanent. He observes that for the mankind the *Mul-Mantra* holds that ideal of unity, reality, creativity, equality, beauty, freedom and culture. He emphasises that each word of the *Mul-Mantra* is a conceptual term and has been repeated thousands of times in key-positions in the verses and hymns of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Furthermore, all the major compositions of the *Guru Granth Sahib* are of the philosophical nature and each one of them invariably gives the exposition of one or more concepts of *Mul-Mantra*. He concludes that the tenets of the *Mul-Mantra* have great impact on the Sikh way of life.

Dr. Wazir Singh remarks in his paper that Sikhism may quite justifiably be described as a protestant religion, with the Gurus as torch-bearers of renaissance in the Punjab. Though their metaphysical ideas affirmed an absolute, supernatural Being, both transcendent and immanent yet they gave expression to their insights about the cosmos, the order of the nature and the human world, in fairly naturalistic terms. He also underlines the characteristics that set apart a spiritualist from a naturalist.

S.Narain Singh in his article 'Importance of the *Guru Granth* as *Guru*' describes that the nature of Guruship in Sikhism is impersonal. Quoting from the *Gurbani* he underlines its divine origin. He underlines that the idea of the *Guru Granth* and the *Guru Panth* is a logical development of the *sabad* and *sangat* respectively. He observes that the institution of Guruship has played a significant role in preserving the distinct identity of Sikhism.

In its recent landmark judgement Supreme Court of India has decided that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not merely a book but a living Guru holding the status of a Juristic Person. Dr. Kashmir Singh looks into the merits of this judgement and explains what is meant by a 'Juristic Person' in legal terminology and its implication in the context of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Raj Kumar Arora explores the concept of divine marriage in the *Guru Granth*. This concept is found in almost all the mystic traditions of the world. It has been observed that the spiritual experience can be realized only at personal level and it cannot be described in its totality. Mr. Arora is aptly right to observe that language of mysticism has been symbolic which provides glimpses of the God. He remarks that *Guru Granth Sahib* explains very vividly and beautifully the marriage of soul with God and fully utilizes the details of marriage between two partners. Though the idea of God as a lover and individual as the beloved finds mention in various cults, creeds and schools of Indian Philosophy, yet the vocabulary and sense of this ideal in Sikhism differs in many respects. In the *Guru Granth Sahib* union of the soul with the God has been explained with the help of marriage ceremonies. There is complete joy and happiness in this married life and to explain this experience worldly terms have been employed.

Dr. G.S. Dhillon dwells upon the concept of social responsibility which is at the core of Sikhism and in fact holds the key to understand its dynamism. He points out that Guru Nanak expressed his disenchantment with contemporary social order and denounced the socio-religious and politico-administrative setup of his times in very strong terms. The religion detached from social responsibility was of no avail. Guru Nanak laid down the principles of his faith in which fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man were the two main pillars. Guru Nanak's view of society emanates from his idea of God, world and man. He envisaged a healthy and harmonious society based on the principles of equality, brotherhood, mutual help, co-operation, tolerance, good-will, sharing and collective well-

being. Guru Nanak gave concrete shape to the idea of human equality and fraternity through the institutions of Guruship, *sabad*, *sangat*, *pangat* and *dharmsala*. The learned scholar finds that the Guru Granth's concept of social responsibility is something more than a codification of duties and functions. It involved an integrated vision of the Gurus, their world-view and value-system meant for a corporate society.

Dr. Kharak Singh in his article 'Guru Granth Sahib and the Sikh Institutions' discusses the emergence, nature and function of Sikh institutions such as guruship, *sangat*, *dharmsal*, *bani* and *daan*. These institutions have played a great role in the organization of Sikh Panth. The institutional setting of Sikhism can easily be traced back to the times of Guru Nanak and it is very well rooted in the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib. The author emphasises that these institutions not only expressed the fundamental values as enshrined in the Guru Granth but also provided practical manifestation to them. These institutions hold great relevance in the modern times not only for the Sikh but for the world community as well.

Dr. Kirpal Singh in his article looks into the historical evidence i.e. available in the text of *Guru Granth Sahib*. He describes various events and incidents that have been mentioned in the *bani* of Sikh Gurus. He emphasises that *Guru Granth Sahib* is the most authentic and contemporary evidence for the history of India in general and of the Sikhs in particular.

Dr. N. Muthu Mohan besides expounding the Indian experience of cultural multiplicity, dwells upon the Sikh theme of cultural diversity. He remarks that one is astounded by the immensity of the cultural diversity that comes across in the Sikh scripture. For that *Guru Granth Sahib* has to be located in a wonderful multi-cultural, multi-linguistic and multi-religious episteme. He concludes that *Guru Granth Sahib* is the first scripture in Indian history that contains a deep awareness about the cultural diversity of the sub-continent.

Dr. J.K. Dhillon in her paper looks into the concept of

humanism and draws our attention to its importance in Sikhism. She describes humanitarian, universal and cosmopolitan features of *Guru Granth Sahib*. She finds that writings of the Sikh Gurus and the Bhagats as enshrined in the Sikh scripture strongly condemn the man made barriers that create hurdles in the ideals of fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man.

Similarly, Dr. J. S. Sabar in his paper quotes liberally from the Sikh scripture to prove that wellbeing of all the human beings was the chief motive of the Sikh Gurus and the Bhagats as well. Dr. Shashi Bala in her paper 'Ecological Concerns in *Guru Granth Sahib*-A Philosophical Analysis' has highlighted the meaning and philosophical implications of ecology, the main ecological premises in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, causes of ecological imbalance and the strategies to be adopted. She emphasizes that according to *Guru Granth* man is morally bound to preserve the Mother Nature. The message of *Guru Granth Sahib* regarding the Nature holds great relevance.

It is expected that the present study would be of great help to the researchers and general public as well. Towards the end I offer my heartiest thanks to our Vice-Chancellor, Prof. S.P. Singh, for initiating and providing leadership to publish this work on the *Guru Granth Sahib*. I also express my gratitude to the faculty members of the department of Guru Nanak Studies and my friends in the department of History, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, who were always at hand to execute the job. Thanks are also due to S. Jagjit Singh Walia, Director, Press and Publications and his Staff for providing all the help to complete this task.

August, 21, 2004

Dr. Balwant Singh Dhillon

Early Sikh Scriptural Tradition : The Process of Canonization

Balwant Singh Dhillon

The Sikh scripture has preserved the sacred writings of the Sikh Gurus and the medieval Bhagats which are collectively known as the *Bani* or *bani*. As proclaimed by Guru Nanak Dev and his successors, the *Bani* is not merely a product of speculation or imagination. It relates to the highest kind of religious experience revealed to them directly by God. Ever since its codification in 1604, the *Adi Granth* has been looked upon by the Sikhs as the most authentic and original repository of the divine 'Word' i.e. the *Sabad*. The Sikh scripture enjoys an unparalleled place of importance in the Sikh way to worship. Besides, it is the principle recourse (the living Guru) which guides the Sikhs to formulate their response to both the secular and religious issues concerning the community. All these factors confer upon the Sikhs the status of *Ahl-i-kitab* (the People of the Book) which makes them unique outside the Semitic people.

History of the Sikh scriptural tradition can easily be traced back to the spiritual ministry of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith. In fact his religious experience forms the very core of its origin. The Sikh tradition embroidering his childhood and early life depicts him as a deeply religious person who was always in quest of Truth. An analysis of his writings reveals that he intensely felt himself to be an intermediary of God to proclaim His will. Responding to the Divine call, he set out to preach his mission to the people of different lands. Lastly, he settled at Kartarpur and founded a religious centre known as *Dharamsala* where he taught the basic tenets of his faith to the people around him. During the itineraries (*udasis*) and his stay at Kartarpur whenever Guru Nanak felt inspired by God, he composed hymns in various *ragas* and metres. When he left the mundane world there existed a single codex of his *Bani* which he bestowed on his

successor Guru Angad on his accession to the guruship. The author of *Puratan Janamsakhi* reveals that the *bani* of Bani that Guru Nanak possessed was bestowed on Guru Angad. Similarly, another source calls it an investiture with the *Sabad*, i.e. the *Bani*.

Recently, some scholars have stressed the central role of oral tradition in the preservation and transmission of *Bani* of Guru Nanak. The above approach has not found much favour with the majority of Sikh scholars, as there seems to be no reason to disbelieve that right from its very manifestation *bani* was not being reduced to writing. There is every likelihood that Guru Nanak born in a Khatri family got education in the art of reading and writing. Without a mediocre knowledge of accountancy, it would have been extremely impossible for him to carry the job of a *Modi* at Sultanpur. It is worth noting that he presents himself as a *Shair* also whose poetic works are considered *par-excellence* in the history of Punjabi literature. His discourse with the Nath-Sidhas depicting the highest qualities of didactic skills is well-preserved in the Sikh scripture. Similarly, his compositions *Asa Patti* and *Ramkali Onkar* which have been composed on the basis of Gurmukhi letters are a living testimony to his education. Moreover, on the basis of his writings we can say that his thought always centred upon writing the glory of God. He says;

ਭਾਉ ਕਲਮ ਕਰਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਲੇਖਾਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਪੁਛਿ ਲਿਖੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਲਿਖੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਲਿਖੁ ਲਿਖੁ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਰਾਵਾਰੁ ॥

ਬਾਬਾ ਏਹੁ ਲੇਖਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣੁ ॥

ਜਿਥੈ ਲੇਖਾ ਮੰਗੀਐ ਤਿਥੈ ਹੋਇ ਸਚਾ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥

AGGS, p. 16.

In *Ramkali Onkar* we come across him advising a Brahmin pedagogue that instead of indulging in rigmarole writing, he should indite the Name of Sustainer of the earth. He appreciates the scribe who is engrossed in recording the True Name. Keeping in view these facts we can well-imagine that he might have been translating his religious experience into writing on its very manifestation. Evidently, the book which according to Bhai Gurdas, he carried with him on his tour to West-Asia, was nothing else but a collection of his *Bani* which he had got together over the years.

The testimony of the *Janamsakhi* tradition regarding the recording of *bani* is very revealing. It describes how Guru Nanak

mediated the *Sabad* to the people around him, how the people submitted themselves to obedience, how the devoted Sikhs then put the *Bani* into writing and how the cultic ceremony was held at *Dharamsala* where besides the devotional singing written hymns were subjected to public reading. We are told that some devout Sikhs accompanying him had taken upon themselves to commit the *Bani* into writing on its revelation. For example *Majh ki Var* and *Sidh Goshti* had been recorded by Saido Gheeho, who was with Guru Nanak on his tour to Southern India. Similarly *Malar ki Var* had been reduced to writing by Hassu and Shihan who were accompanying the Guru during his sojourn in Kashmir. Guru Nanak's stay at Kartarpur was most productive and eventful for the development of Sikh tradition. Bhai Gurdas sums up it in the following words :

ਫਿਰਿ ਬਾਬਾ ਆਇਆ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਭੇਖੁ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸਗਲ ਉਤਾਰਾ ॥
ਪਹਿਰਿ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਕਪੜੇ ਮੰਜੀ ਬੈਠਿ ਕੀਆ ਅਵਤਾਰਾ ॥

* * *

ਬਾਣੀ ਮੁਖਹੁ ਉਚਾਰੀਐ ਹੁਇ ਰੁਸਨਾਈ ਮਿਟੈ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ ॥
ਗਿਆਨ ਗੋਸਟਿ ਚਰਚਾ ਸਦਾ ਅਨਹਦਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਉਠੇ ਧੁਨਕਾਰਾ ॥
ਸੇਦਰੁ ਆਰਤੀ ਗਾਵੀਐ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਲੇ ਜਾਪੁ ਉਚਾਰਾ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਭਾਰਿ ਅਥਰਿਬਣਿ ਤਾਰਾ ॥

1.38

When Baba Nanak came to stay at Kartarpur, he discarded the ascetic robes. He donned family dress and sitting on his bedstead, he started his mission. ... He revealed his message through his *Bani* to enlighten his disciples and to remove their ignorance. These were followed by religious discussions while the echoes of the mystic and blissful melodies were heard. In the evening *Sodar* and *Aarti* hymns were sung, and at dawn *Japuji* was recited by his followers. Thus the Guru's word enabled the disciples to over-throw the burden of ancient traditions.

It is also informed that Bhai Mansukh, a trader of Lahore who had come in to the fold of Guru Nanak's faith, stayed for three years at Kartarpur, primarily to prepare *Pothis* of *bani*. Here at Kartarpur, besides explaining the significance of *Japuji*, Guru Nanak directed his spiritual heir (Guru) Angad to reduce it to writing and recite it, obviously to get it endorsed from him. It indicates that what had been composed and recorded by Guru Nanak so far was entrusted to (Guru) Angad to arrange it into a *Pothi*. Thus, well before the departure of

Guru Nanak first redaction of his sacred writings had come to be preserved in a *Pothi* which he bestowed to Guru Angad on his appointment to the guruship.

Guru Nanak's writings left an indelible imprint on the subsequent growth of Sikh scriptural tradition. It provided powerful stimulus to his successors to add new hymns to the received text. Though, Guru Angad's writings are not much in size but his pontificate marked the next stage in the development of Sikh scribal tradition. His real contribution lies in the fact that he standardized the Gurmukhi letters and popularized their use for scribing the sacred writings of the Sikhs. At his demise he bequeathed the *Pothi* in his possession to his successor.

Guru Amar Das not only enriched the Sikh scriptural tradition but also took a keen interest to preserve its sanctity. Some diverse elements chiefly the Udasis were posing a serious threat to unity and doctrinal originality of the nascent faith. Guru Amar Das took upon himself to educate the Sikhs about the pseudo-guru and his writings. To prevent the possible interpolation of Sikh tradition he is credited for putting forth the thesis of *sachi* versus *kachi-bani*, which later on became a standard rule to canonize the Sikh scripture. Since with the addition of third Master's hymns the size of sacred writings expanded considerably, consequently he thought it prudent to arrange the codex afresh. On the basis of genre and style, Prof. Sahib Singh has come to the conclusion that collection of *Bhagat-bani* which began with Guru Nanak, was also available with his successors. Guru Amar Das' comments upon the compositions of Farid and Kabir coupled with his appreciation of the spiritual perfection of some of the medieval Bhagats indicate that their writings had not only found acceptance but has also become a part of the Sikh scriptural tradition. From the contemporary sources we find that Bulla Pandha was one of the leading scribes at Guru Amar Das' court who had dedicated himself to scribe the *Pothis* of *bani* for circulation among the Sikh *Sangats*. Adhering to the tradition established by his predecessors, Guru Amar Das handed over the *Pothi* prepared by him to his successor, Guru Ram Das.

As Guru Ram Das was actively involved in the organizational set-up of the Sikh Panth under Guru Amar Das, we can well-imagine

that he was in full knowledge of the Sikh scribal tradition that had developed into the hands of his predecessor. On his part he introduced new ragas and metres to the scriptural text which reflect his poetic genius. Following faithfully in the foot-steps of his predecessor he would not allow the pseudo-gurus to confuse the originality of *bani*. He reaffirmed that only genuine hymns of the Sikh Gurus were acceptable. Ever since the pontificate of Guru Amar Das range of the Sikh mission had widened, *Manjidars* and *Masands* had fanned out across the region, number of the Sikhs had swelled and *Dharamsalas* had sprang up at far-flung areas. To meet the needs of worship and study, authentic codices of the sacred writings were required. It called for renewed efforts to prepare the *bani* of *bani*. To encourage the Sikhs to take up scribing of *bani* in a big way, Guru Ram Das remarked that labour of those Sikhs was also sanctified whose hands were engaged in writing the glory of God. It suggests that during his pontificate scribing of *bani* of *bani* was developing into a pious pastime for the Sikhs. The editorial note, namely ਜਪੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀਉ ਕੇ ਦਸਖਤਾ ਕਾ ਨਕਲੁ found recorded in the old manuscripts of the *Adi Granth*, leads us to point out that Guru Ram Das had deeply involved himself in the scribal activities going at his court. From the above note we can visualize that besides the *Pothis*, Guru Ram Das had taken initiative to prepare lectionaries (*Gutkas*) for personal use of the Sikhs, in which authenticated texts for liturgical purpose had been arranged. Early Sikh literature while providing glimpses into the life in *Dharamsalas* informs that public reading of *bani* was an essential part of the Sikh liturgy. Gayand Bhatt while highlighting the personality of Guru Ram Das, refers to the practice of reading sacred hymns which had taken roots in the religious life of the Sikhs. Obviously, the practice of reading in congregation was not limited only to the liturgical texts but much of the compositions included in the *bani* were read aloud for the benefit of those Sikhs who were not capable of reading. All these factors point to the fact that well before the succession of Guru Arjan Dev in 1581 the Sikh *Sangats* had installed in the *Dharamsalas* a standardized corpus in some kind of uniform order. Guru Arjan Dev's remarks that "*bani* is veritably the abode of God" coupled with the evidence provided by the Sikh sources confirm that he had inherited a definitive corpus of sacred writings from his father, Guru Ram Das.

On his turn Guru Arjan Dev contributed enormously to nurture the Sikh scriptural tradition. We have enough evidence to suggest that under his patronage the hymns of Sikh Gurus were being committed to writings. He appreciated the Sikhs who have dedicated themselves to record the sacred writing. Bhai Gurdas informs that there were numerous Gursikhs who were copying up the compositions of the Sikh Gurus to prepare the *Pothi* not only for their personal use but for others as well. Unfortunately, once again the Sikh scriptural tradition had come under serious threat of interpolation. Pirthi Chand, elder brother and rival of Guru Arjan Dev, had entered into an alliance with the detractors, to usurp the guruship of Sikh Panth. The internal crisis within the Sikh Panth was so acute that even Masands, *Rababis*, *Dooms* and *Bhatts* were also found to be divided between two rival camps. To establish their line of guruship, Miharban, son of Pirthi Chand had started composing *kachi-bani* in the name of 'Nanak'. To purge the entry of spurious and unguine writings into the Sikh scriptural tradition, Guru Arjan Dev decided to codify the Sikh scripture once for all into a volume popularly known as the *Adi Granth*. According to Bhai Gurdas, having accumulated the treasure of *Bani* (the *Adi Granth*), Guru Arjan Dev was always engrossed in propagating it through *Kirtan* and religious discourses.

It is worth noting that another mode to transmit *bani*, which had developed in close proximity to the scribal tradition, related to reading or recitation of the sacred texts. As per need the Sikh Gurus had provided to the Sikh *Sangats* the *bani* of *bani*, which had been duly installed in the *Dharamsalas*. The *Dharamsala* was not merely a religious establishment, it also served as a centre of learning where arrangement to impart teaching in Gurmukhi and sacred writings of the Sikhs also existed. Besides, the *Kirtan* session public reading or recitation of liturgical texts, namely *Japuji*, *Sodar*, *Aarti* and *Sohila* also took place in the *Dharamsala*. It is equally significant that the style of expression underlying the Sikh scripture is a blend of music and poetry. It is most suitable for singing in public. For devotional purpose the medium of *Kirtan* had been employed. Beginning with Guru Nanak almost all the Sikh Gurus were gifted singers and connoisseurs of music as well. Even they had employed some *Rababis*, a class of professional musicians to perform the *Kirtan* at

central Sikh shrine. Resultantly, the musical or singing tradition had developed into a powerful mode to transmit *bani* among the Sikhs. Notwithstanding its appeal to popularize the message of *Gurbani*, the musical tradition had certain limitations. The bands of musicians had to perform the *Kirtan* orally, consequently instead of committing to memory the whole corpus, they had memorized only selected hymns possibly relating to liturgy and for special occasions. They had to perform the *Kirtan* only for a couple of hours in the morning and evening so they need not to memorize the hymns in their totality. Considering the medieval milieu, the musical tradition would not have been capable to reach every nook and corner of the Sikh world. It would have remained confined to a few big urban centres where the Sikh *Sangats* had sufficient resources to support and employ the bands of musicians. Moreover the size of the Sikh sacred writing has been expanding under the successive Sikh Gurus, so to keep pace with it orally was gigantic task for the singers. It is quite possible that for sake of memory or for convenience the musicians may have noted down their favourite hymns in small note-books, similar to the collections of modern day *Ragis* which some times they carry to perform the *Kirtan*. Subsequently, it gave rise to another scribal tradition which was minor in nature and comprised selective writings possibly thematically arranged. The musical tradition which had flourished at far away regions from the central Sikh shrine would have been prone to regional or local influence. Though, the musical traditions popular among the Sikhs, had much in common but certain musical variants and modifications might have crept into them. Nevertheless it should be kept in mind that musical tradition was only a means to popularize the message of *Gurbani* but not an end to preserve it for posterity.

The foregoing discussion helps us to understand that the history of Sikh scriptural text, as believed by some critics, is not of obscure nature. Its origin can easily be traced back to Guru Nanak Dev, whose experience of the 'Numinous' formed its very core and basis as well. Truly, to popularize the message of *Gurbani* oral transmission in the form of musical tradition has been a popular mode but it was not the only way to preserve the *Sabad* for posterity. Our sources confirm that beginning with Guru Nanak Dev, the Sikh Gurus were not averse

to record the *Sabad* on its very manifestation. Before Guru Nanak Dev left the mundane world, first redaction of his sacred writings had been compiled into a codex, popularly known as the *Pothi*. The successive Sikh Gurus not only contributed to the Sikh sacred writings but took a keen interest also to prepare and circulate the *bani* of bani among the Sikh *Sangats*. Subsequently, a mother tradition of bani in scribal form had flourished under the watchful eyes of the Sikh Gurus. Early Sikh sources belonging to the period of Guru Ram Das reveal that public reading of bani had become an essential part of the Sikh liturgy. Subsequently, the scribing of bani of bani had developed into a pastime for the pious Sikhs. The *bani* that had been prepared had been duly installed in the *Dharamsalas*. Even, the practice to take *vak* (ਵਾਕ), to read the first hymn from the bani when opened, had come into vogue. Evidence at hand indicates that a well-nurtured mother tradition of bani in scribal form had come down to Guru Arjan Dev on his succession.

Looking back at the pre-*Adi Granth* milieu, there is no reason to doubt that to compete with the main stream Sikhism, three other traditions of bani - the *Udasi*, the *Bhalla* and the *Mina* had come to stay among the Sikhs. The Sikh Gurus were impelled to defend the originality and authenticity of their mission vis-à-vis what their rivals claimed to be. Nevertheless it is a fact that the rivals were also producing their own *Pothis* on the pattern of Sikh Gurus, ostensibly to establish and run their respective gurudoms. We can well-imagine that how the *Pothis* were being produced by different scribes for different reasons and purposes. The point that we intend to make here is that before using any source as an evidence for textual studies of the *Adi Granth*, a text critic has to evaluate the historical scenario out of which a particular source had originated. Besides, one has to unravel the process through which it had been composed, the sources employed for it and the very purpose of its origin. Moreover, a text critic has to give scrupulous attention to discern from which of the above mentioned traditions of bani, a particular source has originated, otherwise the conclusions drawn on its face value will not be valid.

The genesis of Sikh scriptural tradition was not the outcome of aesthetic considerations, especially music and poetry. Though a number of authors have contributed to it yet the whole literature is

essentially religious in nature. It relates to the spiritual realm which sets it apart from an ordinary piece of music and poetry. A dominant section of the scholars of Sikh studies believes that since the Sikh scripture has come down in an unadulterated and authenticated form, from the very persons whose writings it comprises, consequently there is absolutely no need of textual studies on the *Adi Granth*. However, some scholars who have studied the Sikh text from textual viewpoint, claim that there existed some manuscripts of *Gurbani* which represent the pre-canonical position of the Sikh scriptural tradition. While doing textual studies to clarify the process of scriptural evolution as well as to fix the original text these scholars have identified certain canons, the validity of which in relation to the *Adi Granth* need to be explained.

There is no denying the fact that some manuscripts of the Sikh scripture carry certain textual variants which have been the focus of attention of critics. Working largely on the basis of common features of the manuscripts, a method which is better known to the Western scholars as 'system of 'common faults' or 'community of errors', the critics have grouped the extant manuscripts of the *Adi Granth* into four major recensions - the Kartarpur or the Bhai Gurdas, the Lahore, the Banno and the Damdama. The studies that have been conducted under the Western scholars, presume that behind the maze of manuscripts there existed an exemplar or prototype of the *Adi Granth* and that by reconstructing the history or genealogy of the sources one can identify the archetype or original text of the sacred writings of the Sikhs.

What is of particular significance for a manuscript of *Gurbani* is not that it had long been stored or displayed at a particular religious place or had been in possession of a family descending from the Sikh Gurus. In spite of the above merits, the antiquity, authority and authenticity of a manuscript have to be established. For that a text critic has to conduct rigorous inquiries that, when was it recorded? Who was the scribe? What was his motive? Whether it is an original version or a copy of it? Was the scribe/copyist recording it for himself, for an institution, for a group or for his patron? And so on. Thus, while doing textual studies of the *Adi Granth*, each source or even of its smallest part has to be examined in an analytical and surgical manner. Though certain manuscripts considered to be earliest sources viz. the *Guru Har Sahai Pothi*, the two extant *Goindwal Pothis* and MS # 1245

have been extensively used for textual criticism of the *Adi Granth*, yet the same have not been subjected to rigorous methodology in investigating their claim to anteriority and authenticity as well.

The role of oral tradition, in order to identify the original text of the songs of the Bhagats, has been considered of significant value. Similarly, some critics of *Gurbani* have veered round the view that long before taking scribal form the hymns of the Sikh Gurus had been in circulation orally, especially through musical tradition. Hence, on the basis of musical variants found in some manuscripts of the *Adi Granth*, a few critics have claimed of unearthing the original or earlier text of the Guru's writings. In spite of its merits, the musical tradition had its own limitations relating to accuracy and originality as well. As observed earlier, the bands of musicians had not memorized the whole corpus but a small number of hymns for the purpose of *Kirtan*. It is quite possible that to dramatize the effect of singing, the musicians had brought modifications relating to variation in ragas, inversion of antras and addition of 'fillers' and 'vocatives' in the text, to suit their requirements. Above all with the multiplicity of musical bands such type of variants continued to multiply. Thus, to decide about the accuracy and veracity of a particular musical tradition is a gigantic task to be solved satisfactorily. Mere presence of 'vocatives' should not be taken as a proof to suggest that oral tradition had influenced the Sikh scribal tradition. One should also not forget that style of the *Granth* is a curious blend of music and poetry, which is most suitable for public singing. Hence, occurrence of 'vocatives' is not a strange but natural phenomenon. For the Sikh Gurus, the musical tradition was only a means to propagate *Gurbani*, but not an end to preserve it for posterity. Moreover, in the presence of well-nurtured scribal tradition to rely upon on oral or musical tradition for textual studies of the *Adi Granth*, is not a sound approach.

Scholars of biblical studies prefer the canon of 'unusual reading' and that of 'the more difficult reading' to ascertain the age of a manuscript. Its application in the context of the *Adi Granth*, would mean that a document which has been recorded in a casual, crude and incorrect manner to differ with the standard version, automatically qualifies the test of anteriority, an unfair and academically unjust formulation. Critics desirous of taking recourse to the rule of 'harder'

as well as 'unique' reading in relation to the *Adi Granth* must keep in mind that unlike the Bible, the Sikh text has not evolved out of tribal milieu when the writing methods were crude. Rather it has grown in the full face of history and its recording has been well taken care of by the Sikh Gurus. We have observed elsewhere at appropriate place that textual variants can be of various categories viz., scribal, musicological, intentional or unintentional. Their occurrence in a document can be on account of regional, dialectal, educational, sectarian affiliation and personal whims and fancies of a scribe. However, some of the variants of *Goindwal Pothis* and *MS # 1245* as well, are so ill-devised that their presence has so distorted the text as to make it impossible to comprehend it properly. This in turn does not help in anyway that the text is of genuine origin. Similarly, the corrupt use of syllables which makes the text to be of 'unusual' character does not connote that their correct poetic form had never been in use. In fact when a reading differs from the *Adi Granth*, its authenticity has to be determined on the basis of contextual meaning and for that the canon of 'unusual' or 'difficult' reading is of no merit.

Another rule of textual criticism evolved by the Biblical critics prescribes that to determine the original text 'shorter reading' would take precedence over the 'larger' one. The basis for its currency was that in general scribes tend to add to the text rather than to omit from the text. However, it is quite possible that a text handled by successive scribes largely because of intentional as well as unintentional omissions instead of getting longer may turn out to be shorter one. Thus, a critic has to be judicious to observe that whether scribes have lengthened the shorter one or have indulged in shortening the longer one. Critics are aware that some apocryphal writings attributed to the Sikh Gurus and Bhagats as well, have found their way into the *bani*. To ascertain the veracity of such writings the canon of 'shorter reading' can be of immense help for the critics of Sikh text. For instance in *MS # 1245*, the hymns attributed to M.1, M.3 and M.5, are much larger in size than that of the *Adi Granth*. Similarly, the *ragas* of the *Goindwal Pothis* comprise of more writings of the Bhagats than that of the *ragas* of the Sikh scripture. Obviously, in the above documents, more and more writings have come to be associated with the Sikh Gurus and Bhagats as well. The rule of 'shorter reading' when applied

to the writings of an individual author, constrains us to believe that the text of above documents belongs to earlier strata.

There is no reason to doubt that the Sikh scriptural tradition had developed around the *Bani* of Guru Nanak Dev. Subsequently, with the addition of the hymns of his successors and that of the Bhagats, it continued to expand, ultimately attaining the size and status of the *Adi Granth*. Naturally, the *Pothis* which were in circulation prior to 1604, would have been small in volume. Besides, there were lectionaries (*Gutkas*) in which only the hymns relating to liturgy, had been included. The pious Sikhs and musicians, instead of copying the whole mass of sacred writings, had prepared *Pothis* containing selective hymns of their choice, possibly for the purpose of study and *Kirtan* as well. Even, the *Pothis* prepared at the behest of the rivals of the Sikh Gurus, had also come in circulation. Since, the Udasis intended to promote their tradition, hence the *Pothis* carrying the *Bani* of Guru Nanak Dev minus that of his immediate successors, can not be ruled out altogether. Similarly, the Bhalla tradition had tried to minimize the role and authority of the main stream of Sikhism, consequently to include the hymns of M.4 and M.5 in their *Pothis*, as is the case with the two extant *Goindwal Pothis*, was of little relevance for them. Evidence at hand also confirms that though sometimes the text was in full knowledge of the scribe yet he arbitrarily omitted it to record. All these factors suggest that the presence of *Pothis* with 'shorter' text is not a sound proof to conclude that full text till then was non-existent. In fact, the very purpose and use made of the *bani*, were largely responsible for its short or larger size.

It is well-known that a method evolved for a particular religious tradition may not have universal utility, as it needs much experimentation and testing to determine its value for another tradition. We have observed that the Biblical methods of textual criticism are not of much help to unearth the real or original Sikh text. Neither the Biblical and Sikh texts are of same age nor they are the product of similar cultural and religious milieu. Besides they are quite at variance with one another linguistically and from genre point of view. To identify the canonical text we have to keep in mind certain factors that are peculiar to the Sikh tradition.

Existence of *kachi-bani* is one of the significant features, which

helps the critics to evaluate the credentials of a document. On the testimony of the Sikh Gurus one can very safely state that their rivals were churning out 'spurious' hymns in the vein of 'Nanak'. The rivals had also commissioned scribes to produce and circulate their own versions of scriptural writings. Obviously, the *kachi-bani* composed at the behest of rivals had been included in their respective *Pothis*. It seems that later on the scribes trained in the lore of rival traditions continued to include 'ungenuine' writings into their manuscripts. It is also quite possible that the scribes who were over zealous to preserve any literature associated with the Sikh Gurus coming in their way went on to record it into their copies without any scruples. Hence, some of the *kachi-bani* writings have found their way into some of the copies of the Sikh scripture. However, to discern the tradition from which a *kachi-bani* manuscript has descended is not an impossible task. A close perusal of the *kachi-bani* included in the *Goindwal Pothis* and *MS # 1245* as well, reveals that it is not only of 'unripe' nature but also revolves around personal guru, *sarguna* mode of *bhakti*, and ascetic ideals, especially the *hath-yoga* practices. Obviously, the *kachi-bani* incorporated in the above documents owes its origin to the rivals, whose primary interest lay in projecting their peculiar beliefs and practices. Furthermore, the manner in which the *kachi-bani* had been recorded and placed in *MS # 1245*, confirms that it had been introduced at a stage when codification of the *Adi Granth* had been completed.

Hitherto, the critics have given scant attention to trace out the tradition of a scribe with which he was affiliated. They assume that almost all the documents of *Gurbani*, are the legitimate works of the main Sikh tradition, whereas one can very safely state that there were three other rival traditions which were prevalent among the Sikhs in pre-*Adi Granth* period. The rivals of the Sikh Gurus had also produced *Pothis* of *Gurbani*, ostensibly to attract the Sikhs to their fold. For that they had commissioned scribes whose primary interest lay in projecting their peculiar beliefs and practices. In fact the entry of apocryphal writings into the Sikh scriptural writings can largely be attributed to the scribes working at the behest of their masters, the rivals of the Sikh Gurus. Thus, all the manuscripts which presently we have in different libraries and private collections and those which

might be surfacing in near future, are not the product of main Sikh tradition alone. The point which we wish to put forth here is that while doing textual studies, religious outlook or affiliation of a scribe responsible for producing a document is equally very important and need to be probed, otherwise conclusions drawn will not be able to stand the test of scrutiny.

Notwithstanding the reverence in which the scribes held the *Bani* the medieval milieu under which they worked to produce voluminous bani made a few scribal variants of inadvertent variety, unavoidable. Secondly, the scribes trained and working for different traditions on occasion deliberately altered the text to make insertions and deletions, to suit their theological and ethical leanings. Such alterations once having entered the text were often copied without any correction, thus finding a permanent place in the versions popular in different regions and at particular religious establishments. The entry of extra-canonical writings into the *Goindwal Pothis* and *MS # 1245*, can largely be attributed to the above phenomenon. Thirdly, some of variants are of 'intentional' variety and relate to musicology. The use of vocatives, insertion of fillers, replacement of syllables and phrases, reshuffling of text within a line, inversion of *antras* and to render a hymn in two different *ragas*, were not uncommon among the musicians. Some of the variants of the *Goindwal Pothis* and *MS #1245* as well, belong to the above variety, which suggest that the scribes of above documents had tempered with the text under the influence of their respective musical traditions. Since every collection of bani had a specific purpose, difference in the sequence of *ragas* and arrangement of hymns had resulted largely from the use and purpose of the *Pothis*.

There is no denying the fact that in addition to the inherited *Pothi*, Guru Arjan Dev had access to some other sources also. However, traditional Sikh scholars in their zeal to highlight the efforts and labour put into by Guru Arjan Dev to compile and codify the *Adi Granth*, feel that he had to procure *Gurbani* from different sources, especially from the Sikh *Sangats* and devout Sikhs settled in different regions of the Sikh world. They assume that *Gurbani* lay scattered in different sources at far-flung places. But this approach does not sound well. Firstly, there seems to be no reason to doubt that being the spiritual heir of Guru Nanak Dev's mission, Guru Arjan Dev had

not inherited the whole mass of scriptural writings associated with his predecessors. Secondly, though the range of Sikh mission was expanding, yet the most intense concentration of the Sikhs was in Punjab, especially the upper Bari Doab region. Almost all the immediate successors of Guru Nanak Dev had remained busy with in the confines of the above region of Punjab. Thirdly, all the major centres of Sikhism that had come up were situated in and around the upper Bari Doab region of Punjab. On the basis of genre, diction and other poetic elements it has been proved that Sikh Gurus before Guru Arjan had not only access to the hymns of their predecessors but to the writings of the Bhagats as well. Evidence at hand suggest that process of recording and compilation did not take place at a single stage of history but over and over again occurring for nearly a century, coming to an end with the codification of the *Adi Granth* in 1604. In the face of above factors to conceive that Guru Arjan Dev was unfamiliar with the writings of his predecessors and to procure them he had to depend on the Sikhs settled at far away places, look not so convincing. However, to sift the writings of the medieval Bhagats he might have approached their devotees settled at different places in and outside Punjab to procure the sources available with them. On the testimony of titles such as ਗੁਰਿ ਤੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀਉ ਨਾਲਿ ਰਲਾਇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਮ.੫ that occur in the *Adi Granth*, we can vouch-safe that some writings of the Bhagats have come into the Sikh scripture from the sources that were available with Guru Arjan.

It is widely believed that the *Pothis* of *Bani* which were current in the Sikh community during the pre-*Adi Granth* period had no canonical authority. The term 'canon' (Greek : kanon, measuring rod) while applied to the scriptural sources sets the normative pattern to decide the status of a document. An analysis of the *Bani* of the Sikh Gurus reveals that during the guruship of Guru Amar Das three basic principles to fix the Sikh canon have come into vogue. Firstly, the *Bani* of Guru Nanak and hymns coming down from his legitimately appointed line of successors, form the Sikh scriptural writings. Secondly, the compositions of the pseudo-gurus composed in the vein of 'Nanak' are not acceptable. Finally, the unprincipled, false or forged writings that violate the basic tenets of Sikh faith but have been attributed to Guru Nanak and his immediate successors by the sectarian

elements in the Panth are of no religious merit for the Sikhs. The internal evidence of Sikh scripture points to canonization process, which is marked by three pivotal stages. Firstly, it occurred during the pontificate of Guru Amar Das when the 'ungenuine' writings of a 'pseudo-guru' which were likely to effect the originality of bani, were not allowed to enter into the Sikh scriptural tradition. We observe that Guru Amar Das after applying the criterion of *sachi* versus *kachi-bani* had prepared the codex afresh. During the second stage Guru Ram Das very zealously guarded the originality of Sikh sacred writings and did not allow the *kachi-bani*, composed in the vein of Sikh Gurus to interpolate the Sikh scriptural sources. The *Pothis* that he had prepared for subsequent circulation among the Sikh *Sangats* for worship and study had authentic writings of the Sikh Gurus. Third stage related to the internal crisis created by the Minas when the Sikh scriptural tradition had come under serious threat of interpolation. It resulted in the culmination of canonization of Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth* by which Guru Arjan Dev rejected once for all the unauthentic writings which had come to be attributed to the Sikh Gurus and the Bhagats as well. Thus, the canonization of Sikh scriptural tradition was the result of half a century long process whereby only those writings that had been proved authentic were elevated to the status of *sachi-bani* to play a decisive role in the formation of Sikh scripture. Hence, the canonization of the Sikh scriptural tradition should not be viewed as a later development related to Guru Arjan Dev only but it was an ongoing process, co-extensive with the pontificate of his predecessors as well.

It is a well-known fact that with the codification of the *Adi Granth*, the canon has been closed. However, it has been claimed that the activities pertaining to the compilation and editing of the Holy Word "went on even after the reported canonization of *Gurbani* by the Fifth Master; otherwise we would not have witnessed the plethora of different recensions in the years that followed." To explain the emergence of different recensions the above approach does not look convincing. Infact critics usually tend to overlook the vital fact that transmission of *Bani* in the pre and post *Adi Granth* period continued through various means and methods. Besides the tradition nurtured by the Sikh Gurus, the traditions propounded by the rival claimants for

guruship were also prevalent. Thus, all the extant manuscripts of *Bani* may not have originated from the tradition associated with the Sikh Gurus. Similarly, a manuscript may have been produced keeping in mind a particular use of it, viz., worship, singing, exegetical, liturgical or for personal use. Moreover, a scribe while copying his text may have been making use of more than one document at times, hence manuscripts of corrupt or conflated nature may have come into existence. Even over the years cross-fertilization between various recensions may have occurred. Lastly, the variant readings that are present in the different manuscripts may be on account of scribal habits. It looks quite plausible that the codification of the *Adi Granth* would have resulted in complete replacement of all other traditions but it could not be realized because with the movement of Sikh Gurus to the Shivalik hills the sectarian elements within the Panth have got ascendancy in the central Punjab to propagate their versions of *Bani*. The sources at hand indicate that even in the post-*Adi Granth* period the textual recensions such as *MS # 1245* and the Banno which were not strictly canonical in nature continued to be made. However, the issue that to which segment of the Sikhs these recensions were acceptable requires an in-depth study at the hands of critics. Unfortunately, critics have not bothered to search into the history of the extant manuscripts that when, where and who produced them and what had been the use made of them. An enquiry into the origin as well as geographical distribution of the *Adi Granth* manuscripts can provide vital leads to discern at which centre or in which part of the Sikh world and with whom a particular recession of *Bani* was popular to get importance over the others. The resultant data can be of immense value to explain the occurrence of extra-canonical writings in a manuscript of the *Adi Granth*.

Numerals in the *Guru Granth*

Mohinder Kaur Gill

Guru Granth is a sizeable hymnology of medieval India. Besides the hymns of the Gurus, it includes the composition of some Bhagats and Sufis hailing from various parts of the country. The sacred anthology was compiled by Guru Arjan Dev, the fourth spiritual successor of Guru Nanak. Baba Pirthi Chand, the eldest brother of Guru Arjan Dev had laid claims to the spiritual succession of Guru Nanak. He is known to have composed hymns under the pseudonym of 'Nanak' in order to establish the truth of his claim. Meharban, Baba Pirthi Chand's son and successor was fully conversant with the poetic idiom of the Gurus. Later, his son Harji also used the pseudonym of 'Nanak' in his compositions. Earlier Guru Arjan had sensed the danger posed by apocryphal compositions to the authentic text. Therefore, he thought of preserving the authentic compositions left by his four spiritual predecessors and adding his own, compiled them into a *pothi*. In order to check any infiltration by spurious and unauthorized verses into the corpus of hymns, he introduced a system of enumeration, which will be our endeavour to examine in this article.

The anthology, now called the *Guru Granth Sahib*, may be said to have three main sections :

- i) The opening section which is meant to be recited daily. In this section are included compositions meant for devotional reading in the morning and evening.
- ii) Next comes the musical section. In this section the contents have been placed under 31 different classical ragas. This section forms the main body of the *Guru Granth*.
- iii) The last section of the *Guru Granth* consists of miscellaneous metrical compositions with no musical specifications prescribed.

The contributors, whose compositions have been included in the sacred book, have been identified in two ways : each Guru is called *mahala* and a numeral has been placed after *mahala* indicating each

Guru's successive order. The first Guru, i.e. Guru Nanak is identified a *mehala 1*, the second Guru, Angad, is shown as *mahala 2*, and so on. In the case of others their names are given for example *Siri Rag(u) Kabir ji ka* or *Gauri Guareri Sri Kabir Jio ke Chaupade*; *Ramkali ki Var Rae Balwand tatha Sat(t)ai Dum Akhi*, *Raga Suhi Bani Sekh Farid ji ki*, etc.

Opening Section

We shall now examine the use of numerals in the first section of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. We shall, throughout this article use the edition of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, published by the S.G.P.C., Amritsar in 1977.

The opening section which comprises four compositions namely *Jap(u)* (ਜਪੁ), *So Dar(u)* (ਸੋ ਦਰੁ), *So Purakh(u)* (ਸੋ ਪੁਰਖੁ) and *Sohila* (ਸੋਹਿਲਾ).

The *Guru Granth* opens with the *mangal* (ਮੰਗਲ) also called the *Mul-Mantra* :

*Ek Oankar sat(i) nam(u) karta purakh(u) nirbhau nirvair(u) akal murat(i) ajuni saibhang gur prasad(i).*¹

It is not followed by any numeral. Nor is this *Mul-Mantra*, whether used in full or in its abbreviated forms, followed by any numeral throughout *Guru Granth*. *Mul-Mantra* is followed by the *Jap(u)* which begins with the *sloka* :

Ad(i) sach(u) jugad(i) sach(u)

*hai bhi sach(u) Nanak hosi bi sach(u).*²

The *sloka* is numbered '1' indicating that it is the first *sloka* in the *Jap(u)*. It is followed by the first *pauri* (stanza) beginning with *sochai soch(i) na hovai...Nanak likhia nal(i)*³ after which the numeral '1' appears again indicating the serial order of the *pauri*. Each following stanza is numbered progressively. The last stanza bears the number '38' signifying the total number of the stanzas in the *Japu(u)*.

Then follows another *sloka* which forms part of the *Jap(u)* :

Pavan(u) guru pani pita mata dhart(i) mahat(u)

... ..

*Nanak te mukh ujale keti chhuti nal(i).*⁴

At the end of this *sloka* appears the numeral '1'. As we shall see later, all *slokas*, given in the beginning or at the end of composition

and also interwoven in the text, when occurring singly are followed by numeral '1'. Here also, at the end of the *sloka* referred to above, is numeral '1'. Now we take up *So dar(u)*. It consists of five hymns. The opening hymn comprises of 27th *pauri* of the *Jap(u)* with only very minor variations. At the end of the hymn we find the numeral '1'. As we shall see later, all *pauris* in *Guru Granth Sahib* are treated as separate stanzas. The verses constituting a *pauri* are not separately enumerated. But each constituting stanza of a hymn or a *shabad* is separately numbered progressively. For example, there are four stanzas in the second hymn beginning with *sun(i) wadda akhai sabh(u) koi...*⁵ The first numeral is given at the end of *Kahanai wale tere rahe samai*.⁶ The second numeral at the end of *Kahan(u) na jai teri til(u) wadiai*.⁷ The third after *karm(i) milai nahi thak(i) rahaia*⁸ and the fourth after *Nanak sach(u) sawaran hara*.⁹ In between the first and the second stanza occurs a *rahau* (ਰਹਾਉ) *wadde mere sahiba....koi na jane tera keta kewad(u) chira*.¹⁰ The *rahau* is also numbered as '1'. All the *rahaus* are numbered but they are never counted towards totalling of regular stanzas of any *sabad*. That is why at the end of this *sabad* also we find the digit '4'. In figure 4/2, as we have shown, '4' indicates the number of the stanzas of the second *sabad* and is followed by another indicator '2' showing the number of preceding hymns. At the end of the third hymn the digits are 4/3 meaning that there are four stanzas in the immediately preceding hymn which is the third hymn in the serial order in *So Dar(u)*. The next hymn is followed by the digits 4/4. By now it must be clear that while first '4' indicates the number of stanzas in the hymn, the following '4' refers to the serial order of the hymn in the whole composition. At the end of *So dar(u)* the numbers given are 4/5. We need not explain what these indicate.

In the next composition, *So Purakh(u)* in *raga Asa*, the numerals denote the same pattern as followed in the previous composition. Each stanza is numbered progressively and each hymn is also similarly numbered and shown separately at the end of each hymn. Thus 2/4 at the end of the composition indicates that the last hymn consists of two stanzas only while the number of all the hymns in the composition is '4'. We need not dilate the numerical specification of the next composition, *Sohila*, because it follows exactly all the principles of the preceding composition.

Musical Section

The main body of the *Guru Granth* consists of the second part in which the poetical work of all the contributing Gurus and others have been placed under 31 *raga*-headings.

The portion covers a total of 1339 pages out of the grand total of 1430. Rather than considering the numerals composition-wise, we would like to consider the numerals under the following heads :

- i) *Sabads (padas)*
- ii) *Astapadies*
- iii) *Chhants*
- iv) Miscellaneous poems
- v) *Vars*

We hope that by processing numerals under these heads it will be easier for us to bring out the numerological system of this portion, a little more satisfactorily.

Sabads

Except for an additional precautionary innovation the system is the same as we have noticed earlier. *Siri raga* is the first *raga* in the musical section and starts immediately after *Sohila*. The system is the same up to the end of Guru Nanak's hymns, which bears number 33, the last entry being 4/33. As explained earlier, the digit '4' represents the number of the stanzas of the preceding hymn and '33' represents the total number of hymns composed by the first Guru in this portion of the *raga*. Next follows the verses by the third Guru, where the first hymn of the third Guru ends, we find the numbers 4/1/34. In this enumeration, '4' as usual indicates the number of stanzas in the preceding hymn, digit '1' is the first indicator of a change in the previous system. It indicates the serial number of the hymn by the third Guru. While in the opening section the numbers were not made to indicate the number of hymns by each Guru, in the musical section the number of hymns by each Guru is to be counted separately from now onwards so that at the end of the hymns by Guru Amar Das in *Sri raga* we have the following digits 4/31/64. Here it does not need to be repeated that '4' stands for the number of the stanzas in the preceding hymn, '31' stands for number of hymns by the third Guru and '64' is the total number of hymns contributed by the first and third

Gurus combined. Similarly at the end of the hymns of the fourth Guru, we find the formula 4/33/31/6/70 representing respectively the number of stanzas in the last hymn, the number of hymns of the first, third and the fourth Guru and the total number of hymns.

The same system is basically used throughout the musical section in the matter of enumerating *sabads* as also the *astapadies*.

In the case of mixed *raga* falling under the main *raga*-head as in the case of *raga Gauri* under which occur, at different places, *Gauri Purbi*, *Gauri Malwa*, *Gauri Guareri*, etc. There is a slight change again made in order to ensure further any possibility of external interference with the text. In the case of each mixed *raga* the first digit at the end of hymn stands for, as in other cases, the number of stanzas in the preceding hymn. The second digit represents the number of hymns by the same writer in the same mixed *raga*. For example, we have 6/5/17 at the end of *Gauri Cheti*, M.1. at page 156. Again at page 157, we have 4/2/19 in *Gauri Bairagan* M. 1. and on the same page, under *Gauri Purbi Dipaki* by M.1, we have 4/1/20 formula. In these cases 6/5/17 means that there are six stanzas of the preceding hymn in *Gauri Cheti*, but the total number of hymns in the *Gauri Cheti* by Guru Nanak comes to 5, whereas 17 is the grand total of all the hymns in *raga Gauri*, whether mixed or otherwise. 4/2/19 will explain itself readily to the readers as representing respectively the number of stanzas, the number of preceding hymns in the same mixed *raga* and the total number of preceding hymns by the same writer from *Gauri Guareri* to *Gauri Bairagan*. Similarly 4/1/20 means that there are four stanzas of the preceding hymn, '1' shows that there is only one hymn in this mixed *raga* that is *Gauri Purbi Dipaki* and 20 is the total number of hymns in *raga Gauri*.

There is another important sub-division to make any possibility of interpolations still more remote. There is a musical feature called *ghar(u)* (ਘਰੁ). About its exact connotation, there is substantial difference of opinion among Sikh scholars. These *ghar(u)s* have great variety and their number goes upto 17. At most of the places, the number of *ghar(u)* is preceded by the word '*ghar(u)*', for example, *ghar(u) 1*, *ghar(u) 2*, *ghar(u) 14*, *ghar(u) 17*, but occasionally we find a number of *ghar(u)s* given without the word '*ghar(u)*'. For example, at page 337, we find *Gauri 9*, and at page 338, we have *Gauri 11* and

Gauri Purbi 12. In all such cases, the reference is made to *ghar(u)* of the same *ragas*. In the case of change in the variety of *ghar(u)*, the system of numbering invariably denotes this change. It is done as under :

At page 370, in the section of *raga Asa ghar(u) 3, Mahala 5* there are 37 hymns by the fifth Guru. That is what the digits (4/37) at the end of this section speak of at page 379. In the figures 4/37, '4', as we now know, represents the stanzas of the preceding hymn and '37' is the total number of the hymns by the fifth Guru. Following it, we find a change in *ghar(u)*. The *raga* is the same i.e. *Asa*, the writer also is the same i.e. the 5th Guru. Only there is a change in *ghar(u)*. Formerly, it was *ghar(u) 2* while it is *ghar(u) 3* here. At the end of this portion, i.e. *Asa ghar(u) 3*, we have 4/1/38. Next we come across another change in *ghar(u)* and we have *raga Asa ghar(u) 5*, i.e. again by the 5th Guru, and at the end of the hymn, we find 4/1/39. If my readers have followed me properly then I need not provide a key to these numbers which follow a uniform system. Immediately following this hymn in *ghar(u) 5*, we have in the same *raga* and by the same writer, hymns in *ghar(u) 6*. Numerals at the end of this section are 4/12/51. Here again '4', as usual, represents the number of stanzas of the preceding hymn, '12' represents the number of hymns in the section headed by *ghar(u) 6* while 51 is the grand total of all the hymns in various *ghar(u)s* by the 5th Guru.

Miscellaneous Poems

In the case of a few specific poems, such as *dinrain*, *kuchaji*, *suchaji*, *gunawanti* etc. we find the system slightly changed, for instance in the case of *dinrain* at p. 137, we find 4/1. As usual '4' signifies the number of stanzas in the preceding hymn but '1' indicates the number of complete poem.

At page 762 we find a poem captioned *kuchaji* followed by two other poems *suchaji* and *gunawanti*. In the case of all these three independent, poems, the stanzas are not numbered and only the number of poems had been taken note of. At the end of *kuchaji* we find the numeral '1' at the end of *suchaji* '2' and after *gunwanti* figure '3' signifying that these are three independent poems conceived after folk forms.

Vars

There are 22 poems in *Guru Granth Sahib* which have been captioned as *vars*. These *vars* have their own system of enumeration. The *vars* consist of *pauris* (stairs) and each *pauri* is progressively numbered and the last digit will indicate the total number of *pauri* in a *var*. Interspersed between the *pauris* are *slokas*, occasionally by the author of the *var* himself and in other cases by other Gurus. The number of *slokas*, interspersed between two *pauris* is progressively numbered even when the authorship of the *sloka* is different, but their total is not carried forward to the next *slokas*, in the following *pauris*. Wherever, the compiler of *Guru Granth Sahib*, has added *pauris* composed by him to the *pauris* of the *var* originally written by some other Guru, the total of the *pauris* is recorded as if the writer of the *pauris* is the same.

The principles of enumeration in the *sabads*, *astapadies* and *vars* are also applicable to the *chhants*.

Miscellaneous Metrical Compositions

In the third and last section of *Guru Granth Sahib*, we do not find any material difference between the numerical system followed hitherto and the one followed here.

We have had a brief survey of the numerical system followed by the learned compiler of *Guru Granth Sahib* and are in a position to state that he had the visions and foresight to stall any future interference with the sacred text through the simple device of numbering all the compositions included by him in the sacred *Granth*. This device had helped to preserve the authenticity of the text and it is on account of the caution devised by Guru Arjan Dev that we are proud of possessing the same text as was preserved by the great Guru in A.D. 1604.

Sikh Consciousness, *Gurbani*, Western Aesthetics

Gurbhagat Singh

It is not difficult now for the students of Indian history to accept that over the period of three hundred years (A.D. 1500-1800), a new way of dealing with the world emerged in India. This way developed under the influence of the Sikh Gurus and may be called Sikh Consciousness, if the word "Consciousness" can be accepted to denote an integration of thought and action to experience and change the world.

The Sikh consciousness means the following: (i) faith in one god who is both *saguna* (with attributes) and *nirguna* (without attributes) (ii) to work towards and be part of an enlightened community (*sangat, panth*) (iii) to be a non-egoic person through the guidance of the Guru and open one's being in toto (iv) to fully develop the capability of hearing the word (*sabad, naam*). *Sabad*, in the Sikh scriptures, does not mean the linguistic word or the Greek logos which has to do with a certain "system" or "order". Therefore, it can be hardly translated as "the word." The Sikh *sabda* is related to the yogic *anaahata sabad*, meaning the world (or consciousness) without striking. What comes without striking, for instance, of the vocal organs with the outer air, is metasensory or boundless consciousness, never signifying an "order." As compared to the Yogic, the Sikh *sabad*, however, is not that indefinite, it is the consciousness of the Creator-Lord, *Karta-Purakh(u)*. Hearing such *sabad* leads to liberation. Repeating the *naam* also does the same. The *naam* is not just of Him, but Him. Therefore, as in English "name", there is not relation here of world and thing: the signifier (sound-image) and the signified (meaning-image) are the same. For that reason the *naam* cannot be translated as "name". The *naam* is the *sabad* in helpful specificity. The structure of the Sikh *sabad* is paradoxical. On the one hand it is systematic, it can be heard,

sung, both linguistically and other or paralinguistically: and on the other hand, it is *shunya*, close to the notion of radiant nothingness of Buddhism.

Many occurrences have shaped Sikh consciousness, as are generally enumerated by the Sikh and non-Sikh historians of religion, like the advent of Islam and its attack on Hinduism, the disintegration of the Hindu society, a need for cultural regeneration, etc; yet the greatest single occurrence is *gurbani*, the saintly word (*sabad*), uttered by the Sikh Gurus or *saints* included in the *Guru Granth*.

The Guru-word besides its autonomous reasons, emerged from certain conditions of the Indian society faced with a multiple problematic. The society had been declining fast over centuries. One major reason for this was the absence of central shabdic texts. Sanskrit text kept the whole culture together for quite sometime, but when Sanskrit was utterly grammatized, it had become inaccessible to the common person. Then Buddhism developed Pali into a cultural vehicle, yet the main appeal of Buddhism was through its compassionate outlook toward life and not through any central linguistic texts. In fact, Buddha himself became the key paralinguistic text for his disciples.

In this vacuum in which Sanskrit became separated from the main stream of life and Buddhism de-emphasized the role of linguistic texts, the saints of India were developing a whole new set of languages for socio-cosmic communication. It was a mix of Sanskrit, Pali, Arabi Turkish, Persian, etc., and was fully understandable by the common people of different regions. This new language, as used by the saints, had the same mantric power of the vedic and upanishadic language. Culturally, it was a big step. History was being dealt with appropriately. The Sikh Gurus, with there enormous vision, made another leap and brought the new language to great ripeness: they increased its lexical store and luminous power. The word that they created was in the line with their saint-predecessors, and at the same time an enlargement of the saint-vision. The word was capable of generating and integral consciousness, a new unity of the individual, community, and universe. It addressed the contemporary person both historically and transhistorically.

To be specific about the nature of this word, it is possible here

to enumerate a few common characteristics of the entire language of the *Guru Granth*. As the light, *jot* (consciousness, commitment) of all the Gurus and other saints was the same, the word also came with similar qualities.

The Guru-word stems from the one creative Immensity, *Kartaa Purakh(u)*. When Guru Nanak says "By hearing the Word. The fathomless becomes fordable"¹ (*Japuji, Pauree-11*), he is not just talking of Him, but also in Him, meaning thereby, that the sign-sequences in their sound-meaning identity and arrangement, reveal Him, the way He is. Language is not being used here as communication, but as communion with Him and of Him. The end of language here is to generate an experience of holiness.

This holiness is the consciousness of God as He is. Since the end of the Guru-language is to realize the holiness in its own structure, it cannot be bifurcated into the signifier and the signified. The quality of this language is oneness, an absolute unity of the signifier and the signified. This oneness makes the word, *naad*, divine music, rather than a symbol system. If a "symbol", in the popular sense, is the structure that evokes multiple meanings, then obviously the Guru-world is not symbolic, it generates a musical environment in which "meaning" and "image" are inadequate. The word creates His being that is holy and can also be described as musical "emptiness."

If the quality of the Guru-word is a musical *shunya* then the word "holiness" is a special category. It is close but not equivalent to the judaeo-Christian "sacred" which accepts a separation from the "profane" and thereby posits an unbridgable "dualism" in the universe going back to the notion of man's "fall" and the metaphysics of good and an evil.

Very often the holiness is a celebration of the human's unitive ideal: truth, beauty, well being. When the holiness is not a celebration, it is a deep longing for that, as in the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The feelings of *virha* or a spiritual longing in separation also springs from the same unitive ideal.

The unitive ideal, in a way, is the nature of what is, of the entire Being that humans share and manifest. The ideal includes humans' actuality as well as potential, their present as well as future, their

history as well as transcendence. In a very special way, the Gurus and *bhagats* realized this ideal in their own lives and artistically transferred it not the word. The unitive power of the Guru-word, therefore, comes from the personal experiences of their authors themselves. The expression of this experience resulted into a specific ongoing feeling of piety, togetherness, and radiance about the universe. In this entire transmission the human problematic becomes insignificant and is made to look like an "illusion."

A classic example is Guru Nanak's '*Aartee*.' Literally, *aartee* is a form of worship in which lamps placed in a salver are waved before the object of worship, but the Guru, while satirizing this sort of Brahminic worship that delimits the divine experience, incarnates in the word an expansive vision of the Lord. The whole universe as is: the sun, the moon, the stars, the forests, looks to the Guru to be the '*aartee*' of Him. Everything stands ritualistically. By creating this ritualistic awareness the Guru communicates a fresh feeling of the universe that is true, beautiful, and uplifting all at the same time. An integral consciousness that emerges from the word is self-enlarging and renewing, its effect is so transforming that the reader's own limited concerns (problematic) disappear. What remains is an awareness of what is, unified in its mystery and wonder.

This integrating and integrated feeling of the universe (the Lord) that is communicated by the Guru-word is what I have called its "holiness." Its main constituent is a musical radiance.

By 'musical radiance' here means the enlightening experience of the reader that occurs due to an arrangement of sounds that raise consciousness and change the entire way of experiencing the word. Let us take for instance the first few sounds of the '*aartee*':

*gagan mai thal(u) rav(i) chand(u) depaka bane ...*²

(In the UNESCO translation, published by Samuel Weiser, New York, 1973, p.61, the arrangement has been rendered as: The firmament is Thy salver, / The sun and the moon Thy lamps;)

If the reader is an Indian acquainted with the *aartee* ritual, his mind is struck when he hears *gagan* (firmament) becoming *thaal* (salver), and *ravi* (sun) and *chand* (moon) becoming *deepak* (lamps). His usual association with the ritual in terms of man-made material

objects is at once transformed into that of an association of cosmic objects. Seeing the moon and the sun as lamps, eternally waving to the Lord in reverence is a whole different level of consciousness as compared to that of an individual standing with a metal plate with oil lamps in his hands and saving to an image in a temple. The sounds enlarge the reader's perception by stimulating him to see the universe in the new arrangement of objects. They are given the broadest possible purpose. By doing this the Guru uses cosmic meaning as a strategy to destroy the accepted limited 'meaning' of the ritual; yet at the same time his sound-arrangement is not limited to any single meaning or image. The arrangement's strength lies in generating a new light in the reader by the sounds that affect him totally and not just at the level of mental meaning. If we repeat *gagan mai thaal(u) ravi chand(u) deepak bunai*, we would note that in addition to the suggested cosmic meaning of the objects, the sounds representing them are combined affectively. The affection arises out of the conflict of the light 'a's and heavy 'g's and then of the nasal 'n' with the non-nasal 'a's and 'g's. As a result when *gagan* is repeated, it causes energy-intension that reaches the brain through the nasal sound. Modern psycho-biological researches can confirm that the nasal sounds affect the right hemisphere of the brain and the left part of the body which then stimulate the intuitive, silent part of our consciousness. The Guru has used nasal sound four times in this sequence. To prolong the silent the Guru has used the non-nasal *ai (mai)*, *a (thaal)*, *ee (ravi, deepak)*, *ai (banai)*. These sounds help sustain the breath-energy (Praana) inside. It is possible to write an entire essay on the different aspects of this sound-sequence, but very briefly I would like to suggest that the Guru here has brief to awaken the silent part of the reader and also to prolong that awakening. This sort of effort makes the sound-sequence an experience of enlightenment for the reader. I have tested this by repeating these sounds to the non-Indian audience without telling them the meaning of the words used. They did experience and expansion of their consciousness.

The 'musical radiance' of the Guru-word is, therefore, its capability of enlightening the reader, bringing him into the universe that is holy and unitive. If the word is heard in concentration, for which

the word also helps, it causes neuro-physiological changes: minimizes the problematic that results into different maladies. A fresh integration is experienced. The auditor or the reader gets in touch with the source. In primal innocence he begins to realize a meaningful way of life. In no way would it be an exaggeration if I say that the authentic consciousness of the Sikhs stems from a neuro-physiology deepened by the Guru-word. The way the word incarnates the whole cosmos as a community has gradually become the normal Sikh Consciousness. To understand the Sikh aspiration and their hard working militant, and passionate endeavours in life, the key source is the Guru-word. But this does not mean at the same time that Sikh have never deviated from this given consciousness. What happened in 1947 during the Sikh-Muslim riots, inspite of some justifiable reasons, was a classic case of deviation on the part of the Sikhs; yet their essential consciousness being formed by the Guru-word is capable of producing a human bio-chemistry. Pavlov taught us not long ago how bell sounds can condition animals and change their behaviour. In the same way a paralinguistic (mantric) sound can alter the human bio-chemistry positively. Pavlov brought this process of behaviour-change to the attention of the West in a very small and funny way, but we in India have actually known this since the Rig Vedic times. Under the influence of British empiricism our last generation become cynical and failed to elaborate on such powers of our inherited word. Our half-baked Marxist scholars have quite incompetently forgotten how the Gurus used this word to launch their own revolutionary activity.

Is the radiating and radizing Guru-word 'aesthetic?' The term "aesthetic," we know, is from the Greek aesthetic which means "sense perception". The entire Western aesthetics stems from aesthetic. What is considered "aesthetic" is a kind of sensory perception. What is non-sensory or meta-sensory becomes "metaphysical" or "religious." We know this from the Indian heritage, how the Yogic word comes from the center of Being which cannot be bi or multi-furcated into sense, non or meta sense. The whole emphasis of the Hindu and Buddhist meditations is on cleansing one's senses, each and every part of the body, so that it develops "seeing" (*drishti*). *Drishti* is not physical or metaphysical but a holistic seeing involving all faculties. The Guru and

bhagats of the *Guru Granth* were inheritors of this way of seeing. Therefore, their word is physical as well as metaphysical, at the same time. The word's quality is oneness which cannot be described by any dichotomous categories which are so very essential to Western idioms. The suggestion here is that the Guru-word is not 'aesthetics' because it is not a 'sensory perception.' Therefore, Western aesthetics from Plato to Susanne K. Langer, struggling with its inbuilt division ("Manicheisms") is inadequate to grasp the Guru-word.

The inadequacy or inappropriateness of Western aesthetics theory is much more evident in relation to the writings of Guru Gobind Singh. Since he was a saint-soldier himself, his word is always a combination of powerful metasounds that tend to transform the reader/auditor into an integral dynamic being instantaneously. Though this quality is visible in all the writings of the Sikh Gurus, Guru Gobind's fascination for the martial sounds is far greater than of his predecessors. The reasons are historical as well as personal: as an organization, the Sikhs were fighting with the Mughal establishment back to the wall in Guru Gobind Singh's times, in the process the Guru had to go through heavy personal losses in the form of the deaths of his father and sons. From the circumstantial and deep visionary impulses came a special use of the word, that may be termed saint-soldierly. It does not appeal to mere understanding or reason, but directly to the holistic will connected with feeling and emotion that also radically alters our reason.

For instance if we read Guru Gobind Singh's "*Jaap(u)*" the said quality can be realized. Example:

*Namastam Akaale, Namastam Kripale*³

(Salute the Timeless, Salute the kind)

When the reader/auditor experiences this sequence consisting of clashing sounds, like, *n*, *m*, against *ti*, *k*, in the first line, and *n*, *m*, against, *t*, *k*, *p*, in the second line, they hit his consciousness, and with the help of an enlarging lexical meaning that arises from the sounds he is intensified to a new awareness. This change that occurs is not simply sensory, but of the whole being. It is a metamorphosis. That is why the Guru's word cannot be circumvented by the notions of "aesthetics."

Is the Guru-word "poetic?" Is "poetics" good enough for appreciating the word? The way Aristotle has used the term *poesis*, it means there a structure, a form that has somting "fabulous" about it. We know this from the nature of the Guru-word that it has no "invention," it is not "fabulous" in the sense of imagining something. It is based on realization. The realized word, therefore, is a seeing into things as they are. The western poetics that deals with the imaginative word is not a good tool either to appreciate or fathom the Guru-word, the marked quality of which is *siddh-drishiti*, the realized seeing or sagevision. The Guru-word is *bani*, not poetry. *Gurbani* is typically Eastern. This genre is not within the experience of the West. What they call "poetry" is a realm of the "imagination" and "senses". Therefore, the poetics developed from Plato to Geoffrey Hartman has never known *shaloka* or *sabda* as a unique genre having its own rules. The closest that comes to this genre is the Hebrew Psalm of the Old Testament, but as far as I know, nobody in the West, so far, has developed a poetic, or aesthetics from the Psalm with an urgency to invade the tradition of critical enterprise. Some critical writing under the influence of Martin Buber (for instance, of Maurice Friedman, Harold Bloom, etc.) made a little progress in that direction but not very far.

The point here is that the so called "poetics" or "aesthetics" are not adequate frameworks to appreciate the Guru-word. It is jut about the time that we realize that the problems of Western systems are the problems of Western civilization. By introducing these systems into our own we only add confusion. We can certainly learn something form them: how to understand different structures, their constituents or elements as they are, in a somewhat "scientific" or "objectives" sense, but noting beyond.

To those colleagues of ours who are used to western idioms, and have given inappropriate tools to my generation, I would humbly suggest, that we need to develop a para-poetics or para-aesthetics to appreciate the Guru-word. The basis of this new framework is to be a sage-vision or holistic seeing, not just sensory perception. Since the literature of the northern India, especially of the Punjab, is influenced by the Guru-word, only a para-aesthetics can put us on the right path

to evaluate our own literary traditions, developed or blocks. The para-aesthetics suggested here would not be in the realm of *alochana*, but of *prolochana*, meaning a framework of passionate longing for being reborn into the world with one's consciousness fully intact but significantly transformed.

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Stylistic Analysis of a Medieval Religious Text

Atamjit Singh

I propose to present here a study of the stylistic Analysis of the hymns from the Sikh Scripture, the *Guru Granth* compiled under the title 'Anand'. The text under study is the master-piece composition of Guru Amar Das (1479-1574), the third Guru of the Sikhs. Guru Amar Das preserved the cultural traditions of his predecessors and greatly encouraged the use of Gurmukhi script and helped to develop the study of the Punjabi language by retaining its status as medium of expression of the religious text of the Sikhs.

ਏ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇ ਕੈ
ਕਿਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ ॥
ਕਿ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਜਾ ਤੂ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਤੇਰਾ ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਿਆ ਸੋ ਹਰਿ ਮਨਿ ਨ ਵਸਾਇਆ ॥
ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਹਰਿ ਮੰਨਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਏਹੁ ਸਰੀਰੁ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ਹੋਆ
ਜਿਨਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਇਆ ॥35॥

ਏ ਨੇਤ੍ਰਹੁ ਮੇਰਿਹੋ ਹਰਿ ਤੁਮ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਧਰੀ
ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੇਖਹੁ ਕੋਈ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਦੇਖਹੁ ਕੋਈ ਨਦਰੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਿਹਾਲਿਆ ॥
ਏਹੁ ਵਿਸੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਏਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ
ਹਰਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਨਦਰੀ ਆਇਆ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਵੇਖਾ ਹਰਿ ਇਕੁ ਹੈ
ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਏਹਿ ਨੇਤ੍ਰ ਅੰਧ ਸੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਦਿਬਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਹੋਈ ॥36॥

ਏ ਸ੍ਵਣਹੁ ਮੇਰਿਹੋ ਸਾਚੈ ਸੁਨਣੈ ਨੋ ਪਠਾਏ ॥
ਸਾਚੈ ਸੁਨਣੈ ਨੋ ਪਠਾਏ ਸਰੀਰ ਲਾਏ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸਤਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਸੁਣੀ ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਹਰਿਆ ਹੋਆ ਰਸਨਾ ਰਸਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ॥
ਸਚੁ ਅਲਖ ਵਿਡਾਣੀ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਜਾਏ ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੋਵਹੁ ॥
ਸਾਚੈ ਸੁਨਣੈ ਨੋ ਪਠਾਏ ॥37॥

O my body, what deeds didst thou do, coming into the world ?
 Yea, what are thy achievements, O my body,
 since thou comest into the world?

The Lord, who Created thee,
 Him thou Enshrined not in the mind.
 By the Guru's Grace, thy Lord Came to Abide in thy mind,
 and the God's Writ was Fulfilled.

Sayeth Nanak : "This body is Approved
 if it is Attuned to its Lord." (35)

O my eyes, the Lord put His Light in ye,
 so see not another without the Lord :
 Yea, see not another and keep only your Lord before ye.

This world that ye see is the Manifestation
 of the Lord : yea, it is the Lord that ye see.

When I know this Mystery, by the Guru's Grace,
 I see no other than the Lord.

Sayeth Nanak : "These eyes were Blind,
 but when I met with the Guru, I began to See intuitively". (36)

O my eyes, ye were sent out to hear only the Truth :
 This is why they were made a part of the body
 that they hear the True World.

Hearing which one's body and mind blossom forth,
 and the tongue is Inebriated with its Flavour;

The Lord is Wondrous and Unfathomable,
 His State no one can tell.

Sayeth Nanak : "Hear ye the Nectar-Name and become Pure :
 for, ye were Created to hear the Truth." (37)

(Eng. Tr. Gopal Singh, vol. 3, p. 878)

The above hymns offer to us a verbal discourse of medieval vision which is basically holistic. In Punjabi literary tradition, this text belongs to what is termed as *bani*, a structure, the different elements of which are organised in its own peculiar conventions. The present paper, aims to attempt to study the above piece of *bani* through the actual text instead of through general historical considerations. My purpose here, is only to pose certain problems in the context of the study of *bani* (devotional poetry) which overlap the textual domain.

In order to understand the nature of discourse available to us

through *bani*, we have to focus our attention on the system in which such verbal structures are inscribed. Paul Zumthor, in his article 'Style and Register in Medieval Poetry' calls such system a register. He prefers to call it "register in order to indicate clearly that there is no suggestion, properly speaking of necessity, or if there is a necessity, it is of a special internal sort, which he prefers to call "coherence". This registeral coherence can be considered a feature of writing of that state of language possessing a certain autonomy, an interior essence, with its own generative rules, to be distinguished from language on the one hand and individual style on the other. The term writing here in the context of *bani* assumes a special status, which can be understood adequately only when its expressive means are seen as owing their development to the previous tradition. The register of *bani*, constitute a continuous text, pre-existent and substratal of any concrete realization. Despite the 'I' who grammatically controls the *bani padas*, the writing tends to be far from being of personal origin. The *bani* poems, by and large, are created in the moulds which are to a very great extent collective. The registeral signal of our text shows a participatory connection between the word and its register and this connection performs a vital function. It assigns to our text a distinct status, which not only sets to distinguish it from all non-poetic discourse, but which also set it apart from a poetic discourse. It is something more than poetry, which not only encapsulates in and through language experience of this world, but also of the World beyond. The Universe of *bani* is structured on the basis of a tension between the other worldly metaphysics and this-worldly phenomenon. The detail of this worldly phenomenon is only one context. In fact, this worldly experience is used only as a device, as a means of foregrounding the metaphysics of the other-worldly. By constantly emphasizing this liaison between this world and the other, the holy, the *bani* poet arouses a new kind of thematic consciousness, which brings about an overall registeral coherence in the *bani* poetry as a distinct system. In short, its signalling function proceeds from its own creative principles and its communicational apparatus achieves its equilibrium and internal harmony through its own laws and orientations.

The article presents stylistic analysis of the first hymn of *bani* taken under study. The analysis of our piece of *bani* can be made on three successive levels: that of connecting links in the language (phonetic and syntagmatic) that of lexicon as such and that of motifs (thematic constituents). The features of our text, or for that matter any text can be observed from two perspectives, the horizontal, distinguishing discrete elements at each level; the other vertical taking the relations level by level. Total meaning is gradually specified as analysis proceeds from the phonological to the top thematic level.

At the first level of analysis, the representative features are few and less clear, yet the construction of stanzas on rhymes such as 'ਆਇਆ' and 'ਇਆ' in the first stanza put into opposition the tonality of clauses. In the same manner the sentence connectors also indicate some kind of juxtaposition rather than subordination with words such as ਆਇ ਕੈ and ਕਿਆ, ਕਿਆ and ਜਾਂ ਜਿਨ and ਸੁ, ਏਹੁ and ਜਿਨ ਜਾਂ and ਇਕ etc. which help in building the patterns of contrast progressively. Repetition of certain sounds and alliterative characteristics also suggest a contrast between the clauses of the sentence. One sentence is repeated in the reverse order in order to increase the desired sound effect. For example ਇਸ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇ ਕੈ ਕਿਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ is followed by ਕਿ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਜਾਤੂ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ; similarly ਏਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ is immediately followed by ਹਰਿ ਰੂਪ ਨਦਰੀ ਆਇਆ। Again, ਸਾਚੈ ਸੁਨਣੈ ਨੋ ਪਠਾਏ in the first line again repeated in the last line ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੋਵਹੁ ਸਾਚੈ ਸੁਨਣੈ ਨੋ ਪਠਾਏ।

The phonological level of analysis may not reveal much, but these diffused elements are found integrated into much more clearly representative units of a higher level of vocabulary.

We note that there is a great scattering when we subject the vocabulary to formal examination. At a cursory glance one can find some derivational series ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ, ਰਚਨੁ ਰਚਿਆ, ਵਸਿਆ ਵਸਾਇਆ. These are so frequent in the whole poem that they form keys to the lexical system.

When we look at the vocabulary semantically, we note that mostly it is culturally loaded and context specific vocabulary. This context can be called as the context of metaphysical tradition in which

these lexical items receive their meanings. The registeral coherence of *bani* can be fully appreciated only by understanding the heterogeneity of its lexical items. Semantically almost all of the 'heavy' words may be grouped into two Semantic fields of unequal importance, but which connect within a central field in which they constitute mode of metaphorical transfer. In our specimen, lexical items such as ਸਰੀਰ, ਨੇਤ੍ਰ, ਸ੍ਵਣ, ਇਸ ਜਗ ਵਸਿਆ, ਵਸਾਇਆ, ਪਾਇਆ, ਅਵਰਿ, ਦੇਖਹੁ, ਵਿਸੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਦੇਖਦੇ, ਨਦਰੀ ਆਇਆ, ਦੇਖਾ, ਬਿਨ, ਅੰਧ ਸੇ, ਹੋਈ, ਪਠਾਏ, ਸੁਣੀ ਮਨ ਤਨ, ਰਸਨਾ, ਰਸਿ, ਸੁਣਾ ਹੋਵਹੁ etc, belong to our immediate world of experience. Some of them are names of the body parts and others represent our experiential dimension of the world in which we live. Contrary to this there are words such as ਹਰਿ, ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ, ਪੂਰਬ ਲਿਖਿਆ, ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ, ਜੋਤ, ਰਸ, ਸਮ, ਅਲਖ, ਸਚ, ਵਿਡਾਣੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ, ਨਾਮ etc. These are technical words with a distinct import. They belong to the universe of *bani* and are related to the theoretical fundamentals of the institution of *bani*. They indicate to the other worldly experience which is brought into focus by its relation of fusion with this worldly. The important thing to note in this regard is that keywords in this text such as ਹਰਿ, ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ, ਸਤਿਗੁਰ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ, ਨਾਮ, ਰਸ ਸਮਾਣੀ etc. are so frequent that for their original meaning, now lost, there is substituted a set of contextual values with us in the Sikh scripture of *bani*. The phrases such as ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਨਾ, ਮਨੁ ਵਸਾਨਾ, ਪੂਰਬ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਨਾ, ਸਰੀਰ ਪਰਵਾਨ ਹੋਣਾ, ਜੋਤ ਧਰੀ, ਬੁਝਣਾ, ਹਰਿਆ ਹੋਆ, ਰਸਨਾ, ਰਸ ਸਮਾਣਾ etc. coincide with the topic of the discourse and attain a new dimension of meaning. The recurrence of certain lines in reverse syntactical order is also used as a device of making resonant and laying emphasis on some parts of the message. In short, we can say that the vocabulary in the text at the denotative level is very simple, but the whole at the connotative level becomes very complex indeed.

At the level of motifs, the number of recurrent elements is still larger. In the first stanza for instance we can find tensions built up on different levels as following :

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| i) This world. | The other world |
| ii) Performing of good deeds. | Not performing of good deeds. |
| iii) Making of body by the Lord. | Unmaking of the body by the Lord. |

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| iv) Lodging Him in the mind. | Not lodging Him in the mind. |
| v) Receiving Guru's grace. | Not receiving Guru's grace. |
| vi) Lord lodged in the Mind. | Not lodged in the Mind. |
| vii) Primal writ becoming true. | |
| viii) Body have got accepted in Divine order. | |
| ix) Devoting oneself to <i>Satguru</i> . | |

The tension is also built up between two points of time. It seems as if poet is using this tension between two points of time in the temporal flux as a structural device in order to emphasize the meaningfulness of the transcendent, the other worldly :

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| i) Having come in this world. | What good thou hast performed. |
| ii) Since the time your body was made by the Lord. | You have not lodged Him in your mind. |
| iii) By the Guru's grace Lord lodged in mind. | Primal writ becoming True. |
| iv) The body accepted. | By devotion to <i>Satguru</i> . |

These tensions can be explained in the first stanza and also in the following stanzas of various levels. Within the total system of *bani*, we can find these tension emerging from our text at thematic level in the following details :

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| i) This worldly phenomenon | The other worldly
Name Ambrosial |
| ii) Concrete | Abstract |
| iii) Poetry | Bani |
| iv) Worthy of acceptance | Worthy of casting off |
| v) Diversity | Unity |

In our text, the *bani* poet attempts to charter the course of a journey from this worldly to the transcendent world of the otherness. This journey progressively turns one away from one's biological being and in this process achieves the state of 'ਸੁਖ ਅਤਮ'. In the same manner we can describe the journey from poetry to *bani*. In the journey of *bani* the linguistic devices becomes more refined because they refer

more to the soul than body. A *bani* artefact attempts to break the temporal flux of time and superimposes over it an temporal order of the metaphysics of the transcendent world. The biological being ਸਰੀਰ is ultimately transformed into divine being, the eyes (ਨੇਤ੍ਰਹੁ) confined and habituated to see the worldly beauty remain blind of sight till they attain illumination and vision (ਦਿਖ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ) and the ears transformed to listen to the True word.

In our text, the poet has established a system which is of hierarchial nature and which can be comprehended on the homology of linguistic structure. The structure of a language can be perceived hierarchically progressing from the minimal units to the maximal unity. By positing the principle of double articulation, this analogy can be extended further to the varieties of verbal discourses. In our text, we can pursue this process by reducing the structure to its discrete elements as follows :

- (a) Coming to this world.
- (b) Performance of good ?
- (c) The making of the body by the Lord.
- (d) Not lodged the Maker Lord in mind.
- (e) Lord lodged in mind by the grace of the Guru.
- (f) Primal writ gave what was pre-ordained.
- (g) The body got accepted.
- (h) That body which devoted itself to the Satguru.

From the moment the human body comes into this world to its final acceptance in the Divine order, there is a definite process of hierarchical transformation taking place at different levels. In between the two points of the state of biological existence or natural existence on the one hand and significance born out of its acceptance in divine order on the other, there lies a repetitive characterizing the discourse of the *bani*. It is clearly evident from the phrases such as ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ, ਰਚਨ ਰਚਿਆ, ਗੁਰਪਰਸਾਦੀ, ਪੂਰਬ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਇਆ, ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਿਉ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਇਆ that the creator of this discourse has attached a specific significance to the phrase ਪੂਰਬ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਇਆ। This phrase generally comprehended in terms of pre-ordained if translated into linguistic idiom, establishes the supremacy of written culture over the oral one. In this manner, this argument can be extended in favour of the signification through which

the content aspect of a discourse becomes possible. Our text shows that all the terms relating to metaphysics and religion are subordinated to the key phrase ਪੂਰਬ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਪਾਇਆ and hence this discourse empties every item of the content and the thematic significance of empty form oriented freedom of the sign is established.

In the beginning a reference was made to registeral coherence in—context of a *bani* poem. Register in the sense can be characterized as all complexes which resemble to each other, all combinations which have a certain stability and which function as models and include the prescribed response of the reader. For we read according to a set of rules, *bani* as an accomplishment of registeral coherence has its own rules through which its reader's response is shaped towards it.

Transliteration of the *Guru Granth Sahib* into Devanagari Script

Pritam Singh

Normally, transliteration is a much less exacting exercise than translation. In fact, once the principles of transliteration are settled, the work may even tend to become merely mechanical. Where the original text happens to be sacred and of the size and linguistic variety of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, it is natural to expect that the preliminaries will claim as much care and attention as would obviate any possibility of error. But, a survey of the transliterations of the *Guru Granth Sahib* into Devanagari script belies any such expectations and provides extremely sad examples of slovenly work. We have had occasion to examine a number of Devanagari transliterations of the sacred text, such as, for instance, the editions brought out by Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid (1927), the Sarv Hindu Mission, Amritsar (1937), Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (1951), Swami Arjun Singh Muni (incomplete, with commentary, 1960), Qaumi Press (incomplete, with commentary, 1965), Messrs Jawahar Singh (undated). Most of them follow the rather simplistic rule of replacing Gurmukhi orthographic symbols with their Devanagari counterparts and cause immense confusion to the readers of the latter script, because, though genetically belonging to the same Brahmi stock, Gurmukhi and Devanagari have their distinct alphabetic and orthographic systems. Bhai Mohan Singh Vaid was conscious of some of the characteristics that differentiate the two systems and was, most probably, not ignorant of the pronunciational mess that the wholesale imposition of Gurmukhi characteristics on Devanagari script could cause, but surprisingly enough, he opted for an almost mechanical change of script, with first allegiance of Gurmukhi, totally unmindful of its effect on the readers of Devanagari. A quotation from the Jap(u) will make the point clear : ta haumai kahai na koi (ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ; p. 1) has been transliterated there as त हउमै कहै न कोइ. Even those who have only

working knowledge of the alphabets of Gurmukhi and Devanagari scripts know that whereas Gurmukhi needs the addition of medial vowel-symbols (◌) and (◌i) respectively, to make its 'ੳ' and 'ੲ' express phonetic values of 'u' and 'i' vowels; the उ and इ of Devanagari do not require any additional adjuncts to express the same sounds. Thus उ and इ in Devanagari represent the same sound as ੳ and ੲ in Gurmukhi. In Devanagari the addition of (◌) i.e. '◌' to उ (उ) and '◌i' to इ (इ) so changes their phonetic values qualitatively as to make them represent long 'oo' (=ऊ) and 'ee' (=ई) vowels respectively. Bhai Mohan Singh's attempt to take '◌' and '◌i' of Gurmukhi from ੳ and ੲ and graft them on to Devanagari उ and इ is an atrocious innovation. That is probably the reason why no other transliterator has accepted the system evolved by him. Others render the same text as : त हउमै कहै न कोइ.

The Sarv Hindu Sikh Mission, in the Introduction of its Devanagari version, claimed to make an important departure in the concept of transliteration of the *Granth* into Devanagari. Rather than adhering religiously to Gurmukhi orthography, it sought to make the standard pronunciation of the text as its base. For instance, while Vaid Transliterated *chupai chup na hovae* (ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ) as चुपै चुप न होवई and the S.G.P.C., Quami Press and Jawahar Singh Kirpal versions rendered the text as चुपै चुप न होवई. If transliteration is not to become mere transcription it cannot run away from the duty of transmitting to its readers the standard pronunciation of the original text through the new alphabet.

In the opinion of the present writer, the innovation introduced by the Sarv Hindu Sikh Mission was an advancement over other editions, but the Mission does not appear to have carried its reform to a logical end. To quote one instance. It transliterated : *bhukhiaa bhukh na utaree* (ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ) as भुखिआ भुख न उत्तरी, which rendering was adopted by Swami Arjun Muni in his text-cum-commentary, while S.G.P.C., Quami Press & Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh editions remained content with भुखिआ भुख न उत्तरी. Now, if the Sikh Mission had chosen to geminate त in ਉਤਰੀ, by transliterating it as उत्तरी, in order to make the writing correspond to the standard pronunciation, then 'ਖ' occurring in ਭੁਖਿਆ and ਭੁਖ had also to be geminated and written as : भुक्खिआ भुक्ख, or to be still more exact as

ਮੁਕਿਖਭਾਂ ਮੁਕਖ. Similarly, the word sach(u) (ਸਚੁ) which occurs four times in the text, *aad(i) sach(u) jugaad(i) sach(u) hai bhee sach(u) Nanak hosee bhee sach(u)* (ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ), has been transliterated, at all the four places, as 'ਸਚੁ', although according to the principle enunciated by the Sikh Mission, its correct transliteration should have been 'ਸਚ੍ਯੁ'. Evidently, the Mission's work leaves much to be desired. Indeed, the Mission was conscious of some of its shortcomings, for example, its inability to indicate nasalization, which though pronounced by indigenous readers, is not physically indicated in the sacred text. Of some of its shortcomings the Mission was not even conscious.

As two important institutions, namely Punjabi University, Patiala, and S.G.P.C. are planning to bring out new Devanagari editions of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, it is but proper that their timely attention be drawn to the task that lied ahead of them. The need becomes all the more pressing because the two august bodies are reported to be intent on foisting the orthography of the sacred text on their Devanagari editions versions, unmindful of the distortions that a mechanical change in the script causes in the pronunciation of those for whom Devanagari editions are undertaken. The pitfalls are likely to be avoided if before undertaking the project of transliteration, the transliterators clearly spell out their objectives as also the system to be adopted for its achievement. Bhai Kahn Singh, the compiler of the *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature* was one such person who was clear in his mind about what he was after. He made a passing reference to Devanagarization of the *Guru Granth* in his *Gurmat(i) Maartand* (completed in 1938; published in 1962 by the S.G.P.C., Amritsar) and prescribed a cardinal principle for all future transliterations in the following words :

“ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਨਾਗਰੀ, ਉਰਦੂ ਆਦਿਕ ਵਿਚ ਨਕਲ ਕਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਤ ਦਾ ਖਾਸ ਧਿਆਨ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਚਾਹੀਏ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ-ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਜ਼ਰਾ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਬਦਲੇ ਜਾਣ, ਉਚਾਰਨ ਉਹੀ ਰਹੇ, ਪਰ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਜੋੜ (ਹਿਜੇ-spellings) ਉਸ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੋਣ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਣੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ :

ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਜ਼ਾਨ
ਖਟ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਥਟ
ਕਰਮ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਕਰ੍ਮ
ਦਰਸਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ	ਦਰ੍ਸਨ

ਰਿਣ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ

ऋण

ਰਿਖਿ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ

ऋषि, आदि

ਜੇ ਇਸ ਨਿਯਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਨਕਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਾਠਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੁਝ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਅਰ ਨਾ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਰੁਚੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।”

In order to illustrate the operation of his system, he transliterated a verse from Sukhmani of Guru Arjan Dev thus :

ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਦਾ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਰਸੀ ॥

ब्रह्मज्ञानी सदा समदर्शी ॥ ब्रह्मज्ञानी की दृष्टि अमृत बरसी ॥

Bhai Kahn Singh was undoubtedly one of those few scholars whose mastery of Sanskrit-Hindi-Devanagari equalled his proficiency in Punjabi-Gurmukhi and although he did not bring out any Devanagari edition of the *Guru Granth*, nor was his system adopted by any subsequent transliterator or publisher, yet the eminent practicability and utility of his system should be quite clear. But, there lurks an inherent self-contradiction between the theory and its practical demonstration. In principle, he does not tolerate even the slightest deviation from the text, the declared intention being the preservation of the original pronunciation, but he also recommends the wholesale adoption of spellings current in the guest script. This latter exercise, we are afraid, will convert most of the *tadbhava* vocables to their tatsama states, thereby disturbing the whole linguistic atmosphere of the sacred book. An illustration given by Bhai Kahn Singh carries within it the evidence of the Indian classical scholar's inevitable tendency towards Sanskritization of Prakritic elements in medieval texts. *Darsan* (ਦਰਸਨ) has been transliterated as darshan (दर्शन), ostensibly to facilitate its understandability by the Devanagari readers, but without any indication or warning to the readers, that a purist has been at large, transfiguring the original ਸ 's' into श 'sh' ! However, the Bhai transliterates ਸਮਦਰਸੀ as समदर्शी and not as समदर्शी although the latter form would have fitted his scheme much better. Left to ourselves, we would prefer to write दर्शन in our transliteration because it preserves 'ਸ' sound of the original, simultaneously utilizing the non-Gurmukhi Devanagari device of representing the syncopated vowel 'a' by carrying 'r' at the top of the *shirorekhaa*, its clear pronunciation being *darsan* and not *darasan*.

In the light of all that has been said about the principles adopted by various transliterators, our expectations from a Devanagari

transliteration of *Guru Granth Sahib* will be :

- (i) to preserve, as far as possible, the orthographic characteristics of the original because of the fact that some characteristics, as for instance, the use of 'i' and (f) 'u' () short vowels, with the terminal consonants of vocables are meaningful inflectional or orthographic vestiges of Middle Indo-Aryan Languages (though not made much use of now for pronunciational purposes) and are likely to prove helpful to students of comparative philology and linguistics;
- (ii) to make it represent at the same time, the correct and standard pronunciation, as current, as current among accepted scholars of the sacred text; and
- (iii) as far as possible, to accept the normal orthographic behaviour of Devanagari script without any modification.

On the face of it, these conditions seem to be self-contradictory. The retention of all medieval characteristics of Gurmukhi orthography in Devanagari cannot but come into clash with the present day orthographic system of Devanagari. The adherence to pronunciation may also prove sufficiently ticklish in that it may raise controversies at home. For example, in the *Guru Granth Sahib* nasalization has to be introduced at many places by the readers themselves. There are sticklers who like to pronounce the written word literally, even when it goes counter to the spoken idiom or gives unintended meanings. The straight fact is that in the matter of standardization of the pronunciation of their sacred text, Sikhs have to cover much ground, but such difficulties and many more, also need not make us throw up our hands in despair. Modern advances in printing technology offer many alternatives with the help of which can certainly make Gurmukhi characteristics co-exist with modern Devanagari. We have tried to experiment with one possibility in the specimen of transliteration appended at the end of this article. The difficulty relating to correct pronunciation is in the nature of an opportunity and a challenge, rather than a deterrent. There is, therefore, no reason to run away from the difficulties posed by the problems of transliteration.

It may be relevant here to enumerate a few of the characteristics of the original orthography of *Guru Granth Sahib* so that a clear

picture of the difficulties posed by the text is there before its transliterators.

- (i) The text does not use any distinctive orthographic symbol to indicate the gemination of a consonantal sound. Experienced readers, however, do not commit many mistakes and usually pronounce correctly the gemination, where required. Blind orthographic transliteration of the text, therefore, cannot be a proper guide to the pronunciation prevalent among knowledgeable persons.
- (ii) Some, not all, consonantal cluster are represented through conjunct characters. The conjuncts used in the text, mostly in the compositions captioned *salok* *sahaskriti* and *sawayyas* of the Bhattas, are :

ਸ਼ (sha), ਸ਼ (scha), ਸ (sta), ਸ (sta), ਸ਼ (stha)
 ਸ (sna), ਸ਼ (sya), ਸ਼ (sra), ਸ਼ (sva), ਹ੍ਰ (hra)
 ਕ਼ (kha), ਕ਼ (kya), ਕ਼ (kra), ਖ਼ (khya), ਗ਼ (gha)
 ਗ਼ (gta), ਗ਼ (Gya), ਗ਼ (gra), ਘ਼ (ghra), ਙ਼ (nha)
 ਢ਼ (nra), ਢ਼ (dha), ਢ਼ (dya), ਢ਼ (tha), ਢ਼ (tya)
 ਤ਼ (tra), ਥ਼ (thya), ਥ਼ (thra), ਦ਼ (dha), ਦ਼ (dga)
 ਦ਼ (dya), ਦ਼ (dra), ਦ਼ (dva), ਧ਼ (dhya), ਧ਼ (dhra)
 ਨ਼ (nha), ਨ਼ (nya), ਨ਼ (nra), ਪ਼ (pha), ਪ਼ (pta)
 ਪ਼ (pra), ਬ਼ (bra), ਬ਼ (bhya)
 ਭ਼ (bhra), ਮ਼ (mya), ਮ਼ (mra), ਰ਼ (rha), ਰ਼ (rya)
 ਲ਼ (lha), ਲ਼ (rha),

but almost of the places the use of conjunct have been avoided and the absense of *scha* is left to be detected by the reader himself. Experienced persons make no mistakes in recitation and **ਮਸਤ** (मसत, *masat*), is invariably

pronounced as **ਮਸਤ** (मस्त, *mast*), although an uninitiated or untrained person will surely, read it as m-a-s-a-t. Thus, in this case also no indiscriminate transliteration can do justice to the sacred text.

- (iii) The symbol for nasalization has been mostly left unrecorded. The more enlightened readers introduce on their own the required nasal element in view of the requirements of grammar, speech idiom etc.
- (iv) The text gives recognition to only one sibilant namely ਸ਼ (ਸ਼; s)

and dispenses with the sounds represented by ङ or ष of Devanagari. The *same sibilant stands* for से, सीन and सुआद of Arabic alphabet.

- (v) The abbreviated symbols for ਓ (u) and ਏ (i) (i.e. 'ੁ' 'ਃ') retain their functional character fully only when used initially, but are selectively functional when used medially and terminally.

There are some of the salient points that have to be kept in mind, if humanly possible, by any conscientious transliterator of the sacred text into Devanagari or for that matter into any other script. We *Jap(u)*, the opening text of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. This, we hope, will provides scholars of the august bodies-S.G.P.C. and Punjabi University, Patiala, as also others interested in the project, with a starting point. For the Gurmukh text, we have followed the *Aadi Sri Guru Granth Sahib* published by S.G.P.C., Amritsar in 1977.

We are conscious of the fact that the transliteration of the whole text may confront us with many other problems as have not been covered in the appended specimen. For instance, Devanagarites may pronounce लिखिआ, कहिआ, माखिआ or थापिआ nearer to the intended pronunciation if these were spelled as लिखा, कहा, थापा but view of the availability of granthian spellings in some of the medieval Devanagari literature, we have preferred to keep the original 'इआ' rather than 'या' ending. Problems, we believe, are never beyond human ingenuity to trackle. With regard to the present specimen, our only claim is that our method bridges the gulf that exists between the literal and the oral and carries both the traditions as honestly as possible to the Devanagari clientele.

One truism must not be lost sight of. The exact transmission of all the sounds of a language is almost impossible whether through its own or through any other alphabet. For perfection, in this respect, one has either to seek the help of quality tapes and records of the International Phonetic Script, failing which one has to bear with the limitations imposed upon languages by their scripts. For the Devanagari transliteration of his concept, the present writer does not aim at the type of perfection achievable through tapes, records or the formidable IPS. The writer proceeds by accepting the limitations and characteristics of the Gurmukh as well as the Devanagari script and seeks to convey, as far as possible, through the current form of the

script and within its limitations, the current standard pronunciation of each vocable of the sacred text.

Before closing we may point out that the correct intonation and pronunciation of sacred texts have always exercised the minds of enlightened followers. The dedication with which generations of Brahmins, especially South Indian, have tried to preserve the ancient modes of speech of the Vedas, is simply amazing. In fact, it was on account of such deep concern of scholars with pronunciation that much knowledge about the mechanics of language came into being. In the case of the *Karan* also there is a regular tradition of specialization in the correct pronunciation of its sounds, namely *alqiraa'* at. It is our intense desire that the compulsions of the transliteration of the *Guru Granth Sahib* into Devanagari be converted by scholars into a God-sent opportunity for the standardization of the pronunciation of their sacred book. Sardar Dhanna Singh's *Siree Guru Granth Sahib Jee Dee Grabanee Daa Shudh Uchaaran* (Amritsar, 1966) is probably the only dissertation yet on this topic, but that also is neither exhaustive nor conclusive. The S.G.P.C. must utilize this opportunity to make its own specialistic sit with the scholars from Universities to settle this problem once for all, if possible. The principles enunciated by Guru Arjan Dev, the compiler of *Guru Granth Sahib* at the time of transliterating into Gurmukhi script, the composition of various saint-poets available probably, in Devanagari & Persian scripts, may also be usefully studied.

Now follows the specimen transliteration.

१ओंकार सत्तिनामु करता पुरखु निर्भउ निवैर अकाल मूरति अजूनी सैभं गुर
प्रसादि ॥ जपु ॥

आदि सच्चु जुगादि सच्चु ॥ है भी सच्चु नानक होसी भी सच्चु ॥१॥

सोंचै सोच न होवई जे सोचीं लख वार ॥ चुपै चुप्प न होवई ज लाइ
रहाँ लिव तार ॥ भुक्खिआं भुक्ख न उतरी ज बन्हां पुरीआं भार ॥ सहस सिआणपां
लख होहिं त इक्क न चल्लै नालि ॥ किव सचिआरा होईऐ किव कूडै तुटै
पालि ॥ हुकमि रजाई चल्लणा नानक लिखिआ नालि ॥१॥ हुकमी होवनि आकार
हुकमु न कहिआ जाई ॥ हुकमी होवनि जीअ हुकमि मिलै वडिआई ॥ हुकमी
उत्तम नीच हुकमि लिखि दुख सुख पाइअहिं ॥ इकनां हुकमीं बखसीस इक्कि
हुकमीं सदा भवाईअहिं ॥ हुकमै अंदरि सभ को बाहरि हुकम न कोइ ॥ नानक

हुकमै जे बुझै त हउमै कहै न कोइ । गावै को ताणु होवै किसै ताण । गावै को
 दाति जाणै नीसाण । गावै को गुण वडिआईआं चार । गावै को विदिआ विखमु
 वीचार । गावै को साजि करे तनु खेह ॥ गावै को जीअ लै फिरि देह ॥ गावै
 को जापै दिस्सै दूरि ॥ गावै को वेखै हादरा हदूरि ॥ कथना कथीं न आवै तोटि ॥
 कथि कथि कथीं कोटी कोटि कोटि । दैंदा दे लैंदे थकि पाहि ॥ जुगां जुगंतरि
 खाही खाहि ॥ हुकमीं हुकमु चलाए राह ॥ नानक विगसै वेपरवाहु ॥३॥ साचा साहिब
 साचु नाइ भाखिआ भाउ अपारु ॥ आखहिं मंगहि देहि देहि दाति करे दातारु ॥
 फेरि कि अगै रक्खीऐ जित दिस्सै दरबार ॥ मुहौं कि बोलणु बोलीऐ जितु सुणि
 धरे पिआर ॥ अमृत वेला सच्चु नांउ वडिआई वीचार ॥ कर्मी आवै कपड़ा नदरीं
 मोखु दुआर ॥ नानक एवे जाणीअे सभु आपे सचिआर ॥४॥ जिनि सेविआ तिनि
 पाइआ मानु ॥ नानक गावीऐ गुणी निधानु ॥ गावीऐ सुणीऐ मनि रक्खीऐ भाउ ।
 दुखु परहरि सुखु घरि लै जाइ । गुरुमुखि नादं गुरुमुखि वेदं गुरुमुखि रहिआ समाई ॥
 गुरु ईसरु गुरु गोरखु बरमा गुरु पार्वती माई । जे हउं जाणां आखां नाही कहणा
 कथनु न जाई । गुरां इक्क देहि बुझाई । सभनां जीआं का इक्कु दाता सो मैं विसर
 न जाई ॥५॥

History of Sikh Scripture's Translation : Idea upto Trumpp

Nazer Singh

When did the Sikh Scripture enter the British intelligence network that gradually came to be called Sikh Studies?¹ What was the nature and purpose of this network? How did it shape Sikhism and its Historiography? These are the basic questions which confront us the moment we think of India Office's Translation of Sikh Scriptures Project (1857-77) and Earnest Trumpp's English translation of *The Adi Granth* (1869-77).² Though it may not be possible to answer these questions perfectly in an article like this yet more than one thing about each of them can be said with certainty for there is not dearth of evidence to enlighten our way. ³ The archival material alone is sufficient to show the ideological nature of British interest in Sikh past and literature both before and after 1849. By archival material we mean not only unpublished matter but also the official history writing/ books produces by the British administrators.⁴ This article is largely based upon the archival sources produced by the British regime and available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.

At the out-set of nineteenth century John Malcolm reported the availability of Sikh Scripture with the British scholarship of Calcutta.⁵ This scholarship was comprised of company's civil service that had its intellectual forums like the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Fort William College.⁶ He himself had the true copies of them that he consulted for making a lengthy report on the Punjab Sikhs entitled as *Sketch of the Sikhs* (1805-10). Leyden, and orientalist, helped him in this use of Sikh literature for explaining Sikh movement.

Malcolm also reported that H.T. Colebrooke, a leading Sanskritist of Calcutta to had acquired at his own the authentic versions of Sikh Scripture.⁷ Soon another Sanskritist coming from the ranks of Evangelicals in that city took a notice of Sikh literature and its language, *Gurmukhi*, by making an English abstract based upon

Gurbani for the purpose of enlightening the members of the Council of Fort William College.⁸ He was William Carey, a Missionary Professor of 'Sanskrit and Hindoo languages' in the College of Fort William.

Obviously, the first British armed aggression against the Punjab in 1805 led to the entry of Sikh Scripture into Sikh Studies through John Malcolm. He consciously employed *Gurbani* to explain Sikhism including the political history of Punjab.⁹ Doing so he gave a new meaning to Sikh past as well as a different direction to British Sikh Studies. The transformation brought about by Malcolm can be appreciated by making a brief reference to British investigations into Sikh past before 1805.

Beginning with the Delhi or Lucknow based Agents of the East India Company under Warren Hastings (1772-84) the Sikh Studies were practically diplomatic and military in their scope and concern.¹⁰ Even the entry of vaqanavises of Newswriter in this field by the ties of Wellesley (1798-1805) did not make much change in the nature of these studies. In fact, the newswriters were primarily supposed to inform Calcutta or Poona of the military or diplomatic moves the Sikh misaldars against the Afghans, Mughals and Marathas till 1799 and against one another after Ranjit Singh's rise in Lahore.¹¹ In short, the British knowledge of the Sikhs upto 1805 was a matter of military-political intelligence or Akhbars and Agency Reports.

It will be useful to keep in mind that the Akhbars and Reports (Trevelogues and newsletters) were mostly dependent for information upon Indian informers. The latter normally orally conducted this business of giving information orally. Even when some of them did otherwise, they did so on the basis of oral tradition.¹² Interview and direct observation were the chief mode of information informing early Sikh Studies. Consequently, the British writings on the Sikhs before Malcolm were practically oral histories of the Sikhs.

The British intelligence tended to reduce Sikh tradition either into a tale of militarism said to begin with Guru Gobind Singh (Hargobind and culminating into Sikh forays (especially across Jamuna) or anti-Afghan Khalsa patriotism of the Punjab cultivators (Jats) grounded in class oppression and hatred bordering on religioracial fanaticism especially in the post Nadir Shah period.¹³ The year 1739,

personality of Guru Gobind Singh and sectarian policy of Aurengzeb, explained Sikh political history for the early European writers. The eighteenth century made Sikh Studies. In turn, the Sikh Studies made 18th century as the story of Sikh rise against the Mughals and the Afghans. Pre-eighteenth century Sikhism and British imperialism were outside the scope of early European Sikh historiography.

However, the Holkar episode (1805) changed everything.¹⁴ The Khalsa and the British came face to face in the Jullandhar doab. But the Company found the Khalsa quite a friendly power ready to cooperate it against the Marathas and Afghans. Not only this, the Sikhs were more friendly to the British than to one another. The Sarbat Khalsa was no longer a military/ political reality. The doctrine of Guru Khasla took a back seat. It was time for the Sikhs to be guided in all matters, stately or otherwise, by the Guru Scripture, Ranjit Singh maintained retrospectively.¹⁵ The British wished him all success by leaving Punjab to its won fate.

The increasing political importance of the institution of *Guru Granth* by the dawn of the 19th century was also evident from the chiefly patronage that it received for the Sikh priestly classes especially that of the Golden Temple.¹⁶ The readers of the Scriptures were given various kinds of the gifts and grants including the revenue free land grants by the Sikh Sardars ever since 1973 when the House of Sukercahk made its first *dharamrth* to the Temple.¹⁷ The emergence of Head Granthi as the 'high priest' of the Sikhs by the end of Lohore Kingdom showed only the soci-political rise of Sikh Scripture under Ranjit's rule.

With the *Adi Granth* at its centre, Golden Temple attracted the attention of every British diplomat who visited Amritsar between 1806 and 1809. Johan Malcolm¹⁸, Captain Mathew¹⁹ and Charles Matcalfs²⁰ suggest that the Company regime should learn to appreciate the political significance of Sikh institutions and religious classes for its future dealings with the Punjab. Malcolm himself gave the lead in this direction by appreciating *Gurbani* and other, 'original Sikh authors' in his work on Sikh movement.²¹ It had a great politico-ideological import for Sikhism and its future growth.

For one thing, to talk of *Gurbani* and Vars of Bahi Gurdas along with the *Bachitar Natak* was to talk of *Adi Granth* and Guru Nanak

before Guru Gobind Singh. Without denying the significance of creation of Khalsa for the social progress (including the political rise) of Sikhs, Malcolm projected Guru Nanak as the original founder of Sikh progress as well as the author of the most appropriate method of Reformation for (19th century) India.²² By implicitly juxtaposing the path of Guru Nanak to the mission of Guru Gobind Singh, the British diplomat refused to recognize Sikh history simply as the story of activities of 18th century Khalsa. In fact, Malcolm proclaimed that the founder of the Sikh movement had a promise to keep with humanity too. Sketch of the Sikhs delineated Guru Nanak's mission thus:²³ 'His wish was to recall both Muhammadans and Hindus to an exclusive attention to that sublimest of all principles which inculcates devotion to God and peace towards man'

By recognizing the usefulness of 'recall' as a subversive but legitimate subtle technique of reformation to undermine Islam and Hinduism, Malcolm actually showed that Guru Nanak could be recalled to serve the Company and the Sikh with 'peace' and 'reconciliation'. He emphatically declared that Sikh history could be a mean of reconciliation between the Sikh and the British.²⁴ His report anecdotically suggested that the 'old' Khalsa - a soldier and Zamindar-head of Punjab village- and European military officers of the company could feel in each other's meetings as if they were 'brother' equally concerned with the security and prosperity of Punjab.²⁵

As the Treaty of Amritsar (1809) made 'Sikh independence' of Ranjit Singh a British cause so Malcolm thought it proper to make Sikh history as a British Indian public concern. He refused to judge Guru Nanak and Sikhism by Sikh political rise alone. In fact, he advised others too not to do it so.²⁶ More positively speaking, he suggested that a final judgment on the genesis of Sikh movement should be passed only after deciphering Guru Nanak's *bani*. He recommended that the *Adi Granth* should be partially translated to compile an authentic biography of the founder of Sikhism.²⁷

Malcolm was sure that such a biography of Guru Nanak would enlighten (the Evangelical and Benthamite radical) reformers to see the need to indigenize their reform techniques by transforming them in the light of the experience of Guru Nanak of the *Adi Granth*. In short, he made authenticated its originality or Indianness and also established

Gurbani as an historical literature to reconstruct a new reformation for 19th century India.

J.D Cunningham upheld Malcolm's judgement on the character of Guru Nanak's message and its contemporary relevance.²⁸ More than once, he quoted the *Adi Granth* to show how the Guru conceived God as Truth beyond rituals and sectarian worship of 'the Moolla, and the Pandits, the Darvesh and the Soonyassee'.²⁹ For Cunningham, Guru Nanak was the only one among the medieval reformers of India 'to perceive the true principles of reform'.³⁰ In fact, the Guru's search for truth was the same as that of 'Plato, Bacon, Descartes and Alghazali'.³¹ Yet the essence of his teachings was not different from 'the philosophy of his countrymen'.³² For Cunningham, Sikhism was the consummation of Islam and Hinduism. On this very account, its political growth towards nationality was remarkably unique but Indian event for it was an indigenous development in the first instance.

Secondly, Cunningham emphatically declared that Sikhism was a living religion. By it he implied that there was no need for Punjab to import reformation either from Europe or British India. He did not see much difference between Christianity, Sikhism and the teachings of Ram Mohan Roy.

By projecting Guru Nanak as an ally of the modern reforms, Malcolm and Cunningham led the British administrators, especially those who were under the impact of Orientalism and Evangelicalisms to be attention to Sikh tradition. H.H. Wilson, the leading Sanskritist, translated some passages in the *Adi Granth* to show the Hindu civilizational background of the Sikh worship at Banaras.³³ But more than Wilson, it was Robert Needham Cust who under-lined the Indian character of Guru Nanak's reformation.³⁴ However, Cust denied Cunningham's claim that Sikhism was the living religion any more.³⁵ It simply meant that Guru Nanak's message could not be a principle of Indian reformation under the British. Yet Cust was all for making a proper understanding of Sikhism for British political and religious interests.

Cust was an important Punjab administrator known for his Evangelical ideas.³⁶ He was a strong supporter of John Lawrence's Christian Policy, which was in the making by 1857.³⁷ One of the essentials of this policy was the use of religion, Christianity, to enhance

the moral legitimacy of British rule by giving it a 'religious look' for the Indian eye. For this, it interpreted the state principle of religious neutrality to mean that Christianity be given a free hand to grow in India so the Empire could be saved from the Hindu and Muslim fanaticism - which was supposed flourished on the mistaken Indian belief that the British were irreligious rulers.

The conversion to Christianity was in no way impolitic was clear from Dalip Singh's Change of religion soon after the Punjab's annexation. So when the Evangelical quarter raised the slogan 'Christianity best consolidates the empire' in badly shaken India of 1857, the Punjab regime appreciated it by suggesting that lower caste men, especially the Mazahbis, might be recruited to the British army with a view and intention of possibly making them soldiers of the Cross. Hon Lawrence recommended the raising of Mazahbi and Christian regiments'.³⁸ Some such regiments were actually raised. This entry of lower caste and Sikhs (or Hindus) in the army during 1857-58 led the Evangelicals to hope that Sikh tradition could be subverted for British military/political and Christian religious purposes.

The year 1857 definitely threw up the question of definition of Sikhism. Cust conceived the idea of translation of Sikh scriptures.³⁹ He was in London when the uprising broke out. Back in India, he consulted D.F. McLeod, an other pro-Evangelist Punjab official, in this connection.⁴⁰ The two together agreed that Sikh Scriptures should be translated either into a European language of Hindostani⁴¹ to bridge the gap between the Sikhs and administration. Cust himself volunteered to undertake this job provided he was given permission and necessary funds for it.⁴²

It is important to note that it was also a time (1859) when Cust practically opposed the British policy of patronizing Golden Temple.⁴³ As a Commissioner of Amritsar, he unsuccessfully disassociated the British administration from the management of Amritsar Temple on the ground that the principle of religious neutrality did not permit the state officials to preserve the heathen religious institutions. In the case of Golden Temple, the official disassociation was more desirable because to maintain this Temple was to save the fast dying Khalsa polity, wrote he.⁴⁴

The preservation of traditional Sikhism was not the purpose of

Cust when he recommended translation of Sikh Scriptures in the same way as John Lawrence's objective in creating Mazahabi regiments was not to strengthen Sikh material tradition for the sake of Khalsa. The lower caste and partial Sikhs were enlisted in the British army to undermine the social base of Khalsa polity. The translation of the scripture was expected to undermine the ideological base of Khalsa.

Cust was aware of the significance of translation as a mode of recreating a tradition. The translation of Bible had led to a revolution in Christianity, he reminded the world.⁴⁵ In order to demonstrate it in the case of Sikhism, the Amritsar Commissioner composed a life sketch of Guru Nanak in 1859. Later on, it was entitled 'Guru Nanak the Indian Reformer' ⁴⁶ Cust's account of Guru Nanak was the one 'form which all the marvelous has been excluded, and which Hindu, Mohametan, and Christian can take credit'.⁴⁷

Cust's Guru Nanak was for the non-Sikh. The Guru laboured "to break through the tyranny of priest crafts, rituals and caste."⁴⁸ Moreover, he "trided to amalgamate the Hindu and Mohametan religions, and convince all, that they were really brother, descended from one father."⁴⁹ Above all, Cust did not see Guru Nanak as a Sodhi or Bedi for his message "gave no authority to his descendants to practice the wicked custom of killing their daughter."⁵⁰

The British reform of Sikh people and religion had begun with Cust who found the 19th Century Sikhs much deviated from the original percepts of their religion. They did not fulfill the intentions of Guru Nanak, Cust declared. In fact, the Guru stood betrayed both by the Sikhs and other 'thousands of his countrymen',⁵¹ Cust noted how the Punjabis lived the memory of Guru Nanak but 'do not attend to his words'.⁵² Cust, the Amritsar Commissioner reported in 1859 that Sikhism had not future.⁵³ By denying a future to Sikhism, Cust raised the question of fulfillment of Guru Nanak's mission through British rule and Christianity. He assigned the West the task of appropriating the Guru's word, *Gurbani*. Translation was a means of this appropriation.

But translation was only the beginning of the process of appropriation.⁵⁴ The process itself was to be a long drawn one. Moreover, it was to be completed without much controversy. Further, it was never to be a one man show. The Western scholarship was to

be associated with it. The translation was to induce them to come forward of this undertaking. As the debate and controversy was to be avoid for tactical reason so their was no need for the translator to raise any theological issue⁵⁵ He was only to help in arming the scholar-reformers by placing at their proposal the first hand information in shape of translated *Gurbani* to make the Sikhs "see how much they have deviated from the example and percepts of their great Teacher."⁵⁶

Unfortunately for the British, the project failed at the take-off stage. Trumpp is said to be individually responsible for this failure. His missionary background/ methodology and ill-health are enlisted as factors to explain it by his critics.⁵⁷ All this may be true, but what is more significant is the fact that the first critics of Trumpp were the British themselves, and these critics were none other than the original authors of the idea of translation of Sikh Scriptures, namely, Cust⁵⁸ and McLeod.⁵⁹

Both Cust and McLeod found Trumpp's method faulty. They said that he killed the project by pre-maturally exposing Sikh tradition to unnecessary theological condemnation. In this way, the translator confused means with the ends. His job was to make a plain translation. Instead, he passed theological judgements against Sikhism.⁶⁰

Surprisingly, the Sikh critics of Trumpp also see his missionary spirit as largely responsible for producing an anti-Sikh translation. It is a fact that he did not conceal the true i.e. Evangelical nature of either his own being or of his work. He approached Sikh tradition in the most traditional missionary way. He did not know as to how the Evangelical objectives could be achieved in a non-missionary way --- as it was being demanded from him. But one must realize the translation project would have been in no way less Evangelical without Trumpp or with a different Trumpp.

It will be equally superfluous to emphasize his German background or linguistic approach while determining the objectives of the Project.⁶¹ The project was a state undertaking. Its destiny was not be determined by Trumpp alone. Equally important is the fact that the nature of British interest in the project underwent an important modification by a decade after its origin.

In 1872, Cust and McLeod told London authorities that the translation project had missed its real aim.⁶² But Trumpp alone was

not responsible for this disorientation. The Punjab administration had also gone astray from the original scheme.⁶³

Cust reminded the British that the translator was never supposed to show the theological, linguistic or political value of Sikh Scripture. He expressed doubt about Trumpp's linguistic competence by pointing out the German Doctor's notion of the language of *Adi Granth* as old and obsolete Gurmukhi was philologically hardly tenable.⁶⁴ There was nothing like old Gurmukhi or new Gurmukhi, wrote Cust.

Cust and McLeod also did not concur in Trumpp's view that their was no one in India to help the translator by making the Scripture intelligible to him through commentaries. Both Sikhs and non-Sikhs understood the Scripture well and Trumpp could have their assistance, asserted McLeod.⁶⁵

But these arguments of Cust and McLeod were comprehended neither by Trumpp nor by the Punjab regime. Trumpp said that he was unable to draw a line between a translator and interpreter as demanded by McLeod.⁶⁶ The Lahore could not appreciate McLeod's notion of 'popularized translation' because it wanted Trumpp's Translation to be of some use for its policy towards the Namdharies i.e. Kukas. The Punjab officials during 1871-73 were interested in knowing the Scriptural basis of Sikh policy which the Kukas were determined to revive. Trumpp had to demonstrate the political worth of his project. He did so by denying ignoring the *Dasam Granth*.⁶⁷ To ignore *Dasam Granth* was to ignore Sikh policy or war culture. It made Kukaism more artificial. Trumpp's translation to *Adi Granth* raised the question: who were the Kukas?

References :

1. Dr. Ganda Singh was one of the first scholars to take notice of Western writers on the Sikh past in his book *Early European Accounts of the Sikhs*. However, it was with the publication of J.S. Grewal's booklet, *The Present State of Sikh Studies* (Batala, 1973) that the term Sikh Studies acquired historiographical meaning. For an early understanding of this historiographical tradition, see, Fauja Singh, (ed.), *Historian and Historiography of the Sikhs* (New Delhi, 1978).

Apart from Dr. Ganda Singh's book, *The Early European Writings on the Sikhs*, especially Guru Nanak, are available in parts in Guru Nanak's Birth Quincentenary Volume of the *Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. II, 1969, pp. 101-02, 105, 112, 115-17, 130, 140-41, 151-55 and 158-68. For a more

handy reference, one can also have them in Darshan Singh, *Western Perspectives on the Sikh Religion* (New Delhi, 1991), Chapter II.

2. The idea of translation of Sikh Scripture came from R.N. Cust by August 1857. In all, probably, the idea in 1857 originated while Cust was in London. The idea took the shape of translation project in April 1859. But the actual work on translation began only after May 1869. When was Trumpp employed for this work? The British record does not disclose it. See *Proceedings Home-Public, A, February* 1881, nos. 65-71 (N.A.I.) and *Progsds., For, Gen., A, 1873* nos. 34-37 (N.A.I.)
3. Besides the works of Grewal, Fauja Singh and Darshan Singh, see, Leohlin, *The Sikhs and Their Scriptures* (Lucknow, 1974) and M.A., Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion* (New Delhi, 1978) Vols. I-VI. Also Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth or Holy Scriptures of The Sikhs* (New Delhi, 1970)
4. HariRam Gupta, G. Khurana and J.C. Dua had already exposed this material. See, Gupta, *History of the Sikhs* (New Delhi, 1980), vol. III, pp. 173-309; Khurana, *British Historiography on the Sikh Power in Punjab* (New Delhi, 1985) Chp. 2, and Dua, *Eighteenth Century Punjab* (New Delhi, 1992) Chp. 2.
5. See, *The Panjab Past and Present*, op. cit., p. 104, f.n. 1
6. See, David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance* (Calcutta, 1969), pp. 29, 31, 68-71.
7. *The Panjab Past and Present*, op.cit.
8. History of Fort William College' in *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XXI, July-Dec., 1920, p. 184.
9. John Malcolm, *Sketch of the Sikhs* (London, 1812), pp. 3-6.
10. See, J.S. Grewal, op. cit.
11. For the significance of Ranjit Singh's occupation of Lahore and British reaction to its, see, *Records of the Ludhaina Agency*, P.G.R., Vol. II, Lahore, 1911, pp. 31, 136-42-145-48.
12. The company Agents had their own way of writing history. They would 'employ' the Indians as their local but secret informers to collect information for them. The informers were equipped with the questions the Agent was interested in knowing, and they were to supply information in order to find out the answer to Agent's queries. The informer was usually asked to write down his account in Persian language, and his narrative was used by the Agent to construct Indian past in his own language and way. The oral questionnaire supplied by the Agent formed an essential and basic part of his enquiry. The dialogue between the Agent and the informer made it more, oral, though it was documented.

13. See, R.N. Cust, 'The Countries between the Rivers Satlej and Jamuna', in *Linguistic and Oriental Essays* (London , 1880) , Chapter 1.
14. See, Nazer Singh, 'John Malcolm -A Diplomat Historian', *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. XXVI-II, 1992 pp. 20-35.
15. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-Tawarikh, Daftar II* (Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1985), pp. 69, 452.
16. *Political Proceedings*, 10th June, 1853, nos. 217-220 (N.A.I.)
17. *Ibid.*
18. See, Malcolm, op. cit., pp. 84-87, 118-20
19. M.L. Ahluwalia (ed.), *Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Negotiations with the British Envoy C.T. Metcalf* (New Delhi, 1982), pp. 94-101.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 412
21. Malcolm, op. ci., pp. 3-5.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 152-73, 187-88.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 23
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6-232, 144-45.
25. Nazer Singh, 'More on Malcolm in *Proceedings Punjab History Conference*, (1994),
26. Malcolm, op. cit., pp. 23-24
27. *Ibid.* p. 22,
28. *The Punjab Past and Present*, op. cit. pp. 151-153-54.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 151
31. *Ibid.*, p. 152.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
33. H.H. Wilson, 'A Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus', *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. XVII, 1832, pp. 231-39.
34. Cust took a note of Guru Nanak as early as 1846 when he wrote an article on the countries between Satlej and Jamna. But it was in 1859 that he compiled what may be called the first truly historical life sketch of the Guru. A copy of this 'pamphlet' was sent to the Secretary of State for India. The 'Pamphlet' was reprinted in 1857 and 1881. In the version of 1881, it was entitled 'Guru Nanak The Indian Reformer'. For this version, See, *The Panjab Past and Present*, op cit., pp. 158-68.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
36. R.N. Cust, *Memories of Past Years of a Septuagenarian* (London, 1899) *passim*.
37. See, Charles Aitcheson, *Lord Lawrence and the Reconstruction of India Under the British* (Oxford, 1916), p. 119-20.

38. See. George Macmunn, *The History of Sikh Pioneers* (London, n.d.) Appendix III.
39. See note. 2.
40. *Proceedings Foreign Deptt.*, 8th April, 1859, nos. . 141-42 (N.A.I)
41. R.N. Cust "The Adi Granth, or The Sacred Book of The Sikhs. By Dr. Ernest Trumpp, *Linguistic and Oriental Essays* (London, 1891), p. 262.
42. *Proceedings*, 8 April, 1859, op. cit.
43. See Nazer Singh, 'Early British Attitude Towards the Golden Temple', *Journal of Regional History*, Vol. III, 1982, pp. 90-91.
44. *Ibid.*
45. R.N. Cust's letter dated 2nd May, 1872, in *Proceedings Foreign, General*, A, Feb., 1873, no. 64 (N.A.I.)
46. See. note. 34.
47. *The Panjab Past and Present*, op.cit., pp. 167-68.
48. *Ibid.*, p.158.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *Ibid.*, p. 162
51. *Ibid.* p. 167.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*, p.166
54. See. R.N Cust's letter dated 2nd May, 1972, op. cit.
55. *Ibid.*
56. *The Panjab Past and Present*, p. 168.
57. R.N. Cust, "Dr. Trumpp", *Linguistic and Oriental Essays*, Vol. I (London, 1898, pp. 143-45.
58. Cust's Letter dt. 2nd May, 1872, op. cit.
59. McLeod's Letter in *Proceedings Foreign General*, A, Feb. 1873, nos. 58-67.
60. See. N.G. Barriers, Article in Fauja Singh, op. cit., pp. 166-185.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Cust's Letter and McLeod's letter dt. 3rd May, 1872, in *Proceedings Forg. Gen.*, A, Feb., 1873. nos. 58-67.
63. *Ibid.*
64. Cust's Letter, op. cit.
65. McLeod's Letter, o.p. cit.
66. See, "Office Note' made by Punjab Govt., dt. 8 Feb., 1972, in *Proceeding Foreign General*, A, April 1870, nos. 110-114 (N.A.I.).
Trumpp's Letter dated 12th April, 1872 to Under Secretary of State for India in *Proceedings Foreign General*, A, Feb. 1873, no. 59 (N.A.I.)
67. Trumpp's Letter dated 12 April 1872 to under Secretary of State for India in *Proceedings Foreign General*, A, Feb 1873, no., 59 (N.A.I.)

Ernest Trumpp's Interpretation of *The Japuji*

J.S. Grewal

A critical but sympathetic Western scholar has observed that Trumpp devoted too much of his time and energy to the study of the Sikhs to deserve 'less than a critical new appraisal'.¹ We have given a brief but general exposition of Ernest Trumpp's interpretation of Guru Nanak's religious thought in a recent publication.² For a somewhat in-depth study of Trumpp's approach to the *Guru Granth* we propose to concentrate on the *Japuji* which is generally regarded as the most important composition of Guru Nanak. If not exactly easy to understand, the *Japuji* is by no means an obscure composition. Therefore, an analysis of Trumpp's treatment of *Japuji* may in fact give us a fair idea of his approach to the *Guru Granth* as a whole.

The Secretary of State for India approached Dr. Ernest Trumpp in 1869 to discuss the Project of translating the *Guru Granth* and the *Dasam Granth*. The initiative in this matter had been taken by the Punjab Government ten years earlier. The Punjab officials were keen to know more about the Sikhs in order to deal with them. Thus, the major force behind the officially sponsored scheme was politics. Trumpp was approached in connection with this scheme because of his reputation as an orientalist. In 1869 he was teaching oriental languages at Tübingen, a university from which he had earlier received a degree in language and linguistics, and also passed some theological examinations. Under the aegis of Christian missionary enterprise in Karachi, he had produced several studies on Sindhi and Pashto. If the India Office needed the services of a competent scholar, Trumpp needed the patronage of India Office to pursue his own interest further. He accepted the assignment and began to work on manuscripts in the India Office.³

Trumpp realized the difficulties involved in his task and felt the need of consulting Sikh scholars. The India Office enabled him to visit

the Punjab. He arrived in Lahore in 1870 but only to find that few scholars were able to assist in translation. Barrier observes that many Sikh scholars themselves were in a confused state at this juncture. They lacked clarity on the issue of identity, 'as to whether Sikhism was a separate religion or only a sect within Hinduism. Moreover there was no established 'theological tradition' among the Sikhs. Trumpp adopted 'an aloof attitude' and 'egotistically felt that he knew more about the real meaning of the *Guru Granth*, at least linguistically, than those revered for their ancient knowledge of the holy book'. Rather than cooperating with Sikh scholars, he decided to take help from '*Hindu munshis*' and members of the *Anjuman-i-Punjab* who 'helped locate and verify the authenticity of various manuscripts'. By April 1872 he felt frustrated as much with the intricacies of the material as by illness and left for Europe. After protracted negotiations from the Secretary of State for India, Trumpp made arrangements to publish his *The Adi Granth* in 1877. It contained a lengthy introduction on Sikhism and the Sikh Gurus together with the translation of approximately one-third of the *Granth* 'with extensive footnotes and commentary'.⁴

Barrier's comments on Trumpp and his work are relevant for our present purpose. Trumpp was not interested in the religious tenets of the Sikhs; his main concern with 'a linguistic study' of the Sikh documents made available to him. His 'religious intolerance' and Germanic orientation predisposed him to be unsympathetic towards 'things Indian', including Sikhism. He appears to have assumed from the outset that 'Sikhs were Hindus' though somewhat differentiated by certain symbols. He also believed that "Sikhism is a waning religion, that will soon belong to history". In so far as he depended on Indians for assistance, Trumpp's work reflects the intellectual milieu of the period. Despite the gracious remarks which dot his translation and introduction, he made important contribution to the study of Sikhism because his book constituted the first serious translation of the *Guru Granth*. It had a long-term influence and even today it is considered 'a useful source on one version of Sikh theology'. Barrier suggests that the tendency to look down upon Trumpp requires re-thinking.⁵ Indeed, we may look upon his work as dispassionately as possible.

I

Trumpp's explanatory notes and comments constitute the most important part of his translation for an analysis of his treatment of the *Guru Granth*. In his translation of the *Japuji* there are more than eighty footnotes which, taken together, provide several clues to a proper understanding of his approach. About half of these footnotes refer to the sources of this information or explanation. Nearly four-fifths of these sources are Sikh. Besides a few references to the *Guru Granth* itself, Trumpp refers to 'the Sikhs' and the 'Sikh tradition' in a number of footnotes. The former presumably were the scholars he consulted, and the latter his written materials. In a large number of footnotes he refers also to 'Sikh explanations', 'Sikh commentaries', 'commentaries', 'an old commentary', the 'Sikh commentators', 'an old commentator', or simply 'the commentator'. Only one author is mentioned by name, that is Mani Singh. There are more than half a dozen references to the *Puranas*. We cannot think of any additional source of the notes and comments given by Trumpp on his own authority.

Trumpp was familiar with what may be called the principle of internal comparison, or the use of a term in various contexts in the same text. For instance, the interpretation of '*parwan*' as a 'measure' is based on 'other passages of the Granth' as well as its occurrence in the *Japuji*. For '*ridhi*' and '*sidhi*' he gives a cross reference to a composition in the *Granth Sahib*.⁷ He thought that '*keti*' should be accompanied by '*sirsti*', to mean 'how much creation or people', but this was a common omission in the *Granth*,⁸ the 'commentaries' explain the word *panch* in different ways, but it is evident from 'other passages in the *Granth*' that it signified a holy, pious man.⁹ Unfortunately, these are the only instances of internal comparison.

Trumpp's references to other Sikh sources, past or present, are much more numerous. Occasionally, received information is passed on to the reader without any comment. For instance, the *Japuji* according to 'the Sikh tradition' was composed by Guru Nanak at Mount Sumeru where he had a conversation with the Siddhs; '*gura ik dehi bujhai*' is said to be the petition of Angad', the Sikhs identify *dharm khand* with *Brahma-loka*.¹⁰ The present day Sikh scholars may contest the Sikh tradition relayed by Trumpp but what is relevant for our present

purpose is that he appears to accept the received tradition. This is evident from several other footnotes too : the Sikh interpretation that every man writes down his deeds to present the account to Dharmraj on dying, or the view of the old commentaries that the person who attributes anything to himself receives no honour in the life hereafter.¹¹

More often, however, Trumpp does not accept the Sikh interpretation. For example, the Sikh commentaries explain *nadari nihai* as 'whom he looks at, he becomes happy', but Trumpp points out that there is no indication of 'the change of the subject'. Therefore, he interprets the line as 'having created he sees it and is happy by the sight'.¹² His own interpretation is equally inadequate. Similarly, the interpretation of *sir(i) bhar(u)* put forward by an anonymous commentator as 'with the head downwards' is accepted by Trumpp when he renders it as 'bending the head downwards'.¹³ But to a twentieth-century scholar this phrase means the 'burden of blame'. Thus, the rejection of a Sikh tradition does not necessarily lead to a correct interpretation. But Trumpp could be right too in rejecting a Sikh interpretation or explanation. The old commentary which explains *anil(u)* (not blue) as water is wrong because the meaning of this term in the given context is 'spotless'.¹⁴ Sometimes it is not the context but 'grammar' that dictates the sense suggested by Trumpp. The term *hoiai*, for instance, is 'a passive form' and therefore it should mean 'it is become, whereas the Sikhs take it to mean 'we become'¹⁵ It is possible to become' (*ho sakada hai*) remains closer to Trumpp's meaning.

However, even a categorical rejection of the Sikh tradition does not mean that Trumpp's own understanding was adequate or accurate. A commentary explains *nisan(u)* as *lekh*, meaning lot or destiny. But to Trumpp the sense of *gavai ko dat(i) janai nisan(u)* appears to be that 'God may be known from the gifts he is bestowing'. He does not feel sure, however, and goes on to suggest that *nisan* in Sanskrit means 'perception'. Therefore the line would mean 'if one is able to perceive' the gift (*dat*).¹⁶ The passage starting with *sacha sahib(u) sach(u) nai bhakhia bhao apar(u)* is a 'dark passage' for Trumpp. An old Sikh commentary explains the line thus : 'All the other names of God are uttered in praise; as inside (in the heart) love dwells, so they praise him'. This is not accepted by Trumpp because it does not appear to make much sense.¹⁷ But his own literal translation of the line does not

help. The passage is not really 'dark'. The crucial word is *nai* which is taken by Trumpp to mean 'name', whereas it refers to justice or law. The import of the passage is that God is truly existing, he is inevitably just, his language is love and he is infinite. The line *mannai mag(u) na challai panth* was explained by the Sikhs in different ways. Mani Singh was silent on the point but another commentary explained it as : 'On the journey onwards there is very high (difficult) road, on which one cannot ascend'. Trumpp rejects it because it apperas to be as 'Musalman idea' (and he does not expect to find any Islamic ideas in the compositions of Guru Nanak.) In his view, since *mag* in Sanskrit means 'anxious' too, it appears to fit the context. Therefore, he renders it as 'he does not anxiously go his way', which turns out to be far off the mark.¹⁸ The Sikh commentaries do not know what to make of the words : *suast(i) ath(i) bani barmao, satt(i) suhan(u) sada man(u) chao*. Trumpp tries to guess at the sense, relying again on his knowledge of Sanskrit. The Brahman when asking for a gift, says 'blessed' (*suasti*). 'As men give gifts willingly when thus addressed by a Brahman, so God is pleased when there is always desire in the heart to praise him and to ask from him.' Finding it hard to comprehend the lines, Trumpp goes on to say that they are not logically connected with what follows. Instead of admitting that he has failed to see the connection, he goes on to add : 'Nanak is in the habit of rambling from one thought to another without any attention to logical coherence'.¹⁹

Trumpp's inability to come out with satisfactory explanation makes him rather aggressive. The Sikh commentators are 'all totally unacquainted with the grammar of the old 'Hindui and they pass difficult words without giving the least hint about their meaning'. The words in questions are *Nanak akhan(i) sabh(u) ko akhai*, rendered by Trumpp as 'O Nanak : from the saying of (others), every one says (it)'. Notwithstanding Trumpp's confidence that he knew old Hindi grammar, this rendering of the line remains unsatisfactory obviously because it does not make such sense in the given context. Another line, *sahas athara kahin kateba aslu ik dhat*, presented a simialr problem. The Sikhs are in great trouble about the explanation of these words, and give all possible comments'. Trumpp vaguely feels the import that here are innumerable words other than the eighteen thousand mentioned in the Semitic scriptures (*kateba*). But his inference is based

on a mistaken connotation of *dhat* which to him signifies 'a constituent part of anything', and in the present context 'a single hair' out of those which constitute the hairs of a horse.²¹ In another verse, Trumpp misses the import because he fails to get at the meaning of *girha seti* (mountainlike). But his comment is significant : the Sikh commentators are totally bewildered about this verse which for Trumpp too is 'without any apparent logical connexion'.²²

Trumpp's scholarly haughtiness comes to the surface in some other verses also. The whole verse starting with the line *ant(u) na sifti kahin(i) na ant* is 'totally misunderstood' in the Sikh commentaries.²³ Trumpp does not tell us why. But his own rendering of this verse is far from satisfactory. In another verse, *jugat(i)-dandd(a)* is taken by Trumpp to mean 'use faith for the same purpose as he uses his staff'. Actually, the word *jugat* goes with *kuari kaia* and the word *danda* goes with *partit*. This would mean that restraint on sexual desires was to serve as the *jugat* and faith was to serve as the *danda* of the Jogi. The import is missed by Trumpp, but he does not hesitate to pronounce that 'all the Sikh explanations are wrong'.²⁴ Logically, therefore, there is no hesitation on his part to deviate from 'the common explanations of the Sikh's which, in any case, are 'mostly ludicrous and pass in silence whatever offers particular difficulties'.²⁵ The verse in question starts with the line *akhan(i)* for, *chuppai nah jor(u)*. This perhaps is the best example of a translation that is more or less accurate but fails to convey any meaning. Similarly, Trumpp's rendering of *pawan guru* as 'wind is Guru' is literally accurate but it does not convey any meaning.²⁶

The only Sikh commentator to be named, Mani Singh appears at the very beginning, in Trumpp's interpretation of *ad(i) sach(u), jugad(i) sach(u)* which is rendered by him as 'at the beginning' and 'at the beginning of the Yuga'. Mani Singh's explanation is 'when there was as yet no beginning of the world, Brahm was true (existing); when the world was made, then also Brahm was true'.²⁷ It is possible to maintain that Mani Singh is closer to the original in making an explicit statement that God existed before the creation of the universe. In another case, Trumpp appears to be closer to the original. In his interpretation of *dosi dos dharai*, Trumpp thinks that God 'puts the sin on the sinners'. According to Mani Singh, however, 'the sinners will blame him'.

Trumpp points out that the Mani Singh is wrong because the subject, that is God, remains the same. It is interesting to note how Trumpp makes use of his knowledge of grammar.²⁸ However, this knowledge does not help him in realizing when a word is used as a metaphor. In *dharat dhaval* he finds 'the earth' and 'the white (bull)', apparently supported by Mani Singh's interpretation : 'The white bull stands, having lifted up the load of the earth'.²⁹ Elsewhere, however, Trumpp accepts Mani Singh's explanation in which *dhaul* (or *dhaval*) is a metaphor for support : the earth is supported not by the bull but by the fixed law and mercy of God.³⁰ In another verse, *tan(i) bhed* is explained by Mani Singh as 'into their body the secret of God has come'. Trumpp accepts this explanation when he renders the phrase as '(in) their body the secret (of God)'.³¹ But this does not make the meaning clear. In another verse, Mani Singh takes *kavao* to signify Onkar (Om), but Trumpp accepts the explanation of another old commentator who equates *kavao* with tank : 'One *masha* of wind, one *masha* of water, one *masha* of fire, one *masha* of earth, these are four *mashas* were made; a *Kavao* is one tank of it'. Trumpp says that this 'best suits the context'.³² But *Kavao* interpreted as command or order suits the context much better. Mani Singh's definition of the *ai-panthi* Jogi as the one who live 'without enmity' with all men is not acceptable to Trumpp.³³ But Mani Singh appears to be closer to the original.

It is quite clear that Mani Singh held on special authority for Trumpp, and stands bracketed in fact with the other representatives of the Sikh tradition. Trumpp accepts or rejects the Sikh tradition in the light of his own understanding. What informed his understanding the most was knowledge of grammar and philology. He tended to prefer Sanskrit connotations of words. The principle of internal comparison was occasionally invoked by him. His indifferent command over the Punjabi language and its idiom proved to be a serious handicap. He failed quite often to make any distinction between the literal and the metaphorical use of words. The absence of any strong tradition of exegesis of the Sikh scriptures was another serious disadvantage. As a commissioned author, Trumpp was expected to produce an impressive work within a limited time. Dissatisfied with his achievement he tended to blame the text or its Sikh interpreters.

There was yet another factor which affected Trumpp's

understanding of the *Guru Granth* : his familiarity with the Puranic tradition. In the *Japuji* there is only one reference to the *Bhagavata Purana*, but it is not without significance. As an explanation of '*eka mai*', Trumpp observes that in the *Bhagvata Purana* 'the divine will, contemplating its expansion into manifoldness, is made to denote a female deity, coequal and coeternal with the First cause, whose name is Maya. By her the 'Lord made the universe'. Trumpp goes on to add that the originally poetical personification is 'also adopted here'.³⁴ In other words, this view is attributed to Guru Nanak. But this was the belief current among his contemporaries. In this view, not Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva but 'He' runs the universe as 'He' pleases (*Jiv tis(u) bhavai tivai chalavai*).

Trumpp's statement about the *Bhagavata Purana*, as he makes clear in his note, was actually based on the the *Vishnu Purana* which was available to him in H.H. Wilson's translation.³⁵ This work figures elsewhere too in the annotation. For the Siddhas or 'perfect ones', for example, the reader is referred to the *Vishnu Purana* (in which the term is not associated with the Yogis).³⁶ Trumpp adds, however, that in the *Granth Sahib*, Siddh denotes also a Jogi who has attained to supernatural power..³⁷ Trumpp's preoccupation with the *Vishnu Purana* induces him to substitute '*sur(i) nar*' of the *Granth Sahib* with *nara* of the *Purana*, the former representing a person with the instincts of a pig and the the latter a kind of centaur 'with the limbs of horse and human bodies'.³⁸ *Samadhi* is explained by Trumpp as complete identification with the object of meditation on the basis of the distinction made by Patanjali between *dhian* and *samadhi* in a footnote by Wilson.³⁹ The '*mohinian*' of the *Japuji* are equated by Trumpp with the *apasaras* of the *Vishnu Purana*.⁴⁰ Similarly '*ridhhi*' and '*sidhhi*' are explained on the authority of the *Vishnu Purana*, with the qualification that in the *Granth Sahib* they generally stand for prosperity and success'.⁴¹ The '*karam-bhumi*' is this world according to the *Vishnu Purana*.⁴² Though Trumpp was aware that the terms used by Guru Nanak did not necessarily have the same connotation as in the *Vishnu Purana*, he tended to accept the Puranic significance of terms and concepts.

II

We may now turn to footnotes given by Trumpp on his own authority, that is without reference to other sources. Since he was writing for the Western readers he was anxious at times to explain even simple terms. His footnotes include terms like *chalana* (walking), *niranjan* (free from stain or contact with Maya), *Nath* (the nine *naths*, or great *gurus* of the Jogis), *nav* (names), *bhandar* (store house), *akhan* (to tell), *machh* (the mortal world), *varbhanda* (the globe) and *pahara* (the workshop of a goldsmith).⁴³ Then there are explanations which involve an element of interpretation. There are warriors who 'eat' iron on the face (*munh bhakh sar*), or receive wounds in the field of battle.⁴⁴ In *dukh par har sukh ghar lai jai*, it is explained that the reference is to the worshipper.⁴⁵ The cryptic expression *manani ki gat* is construed as the state of the one 'who accepts the name'.⁴⁶ Honour in particular context refers to honour in the life hereafter.⁴⁷ 'Coming and going' refers to transmigratory cycle.⁴⁸

There are some longer explanations. The four mines (*khani charey*) are mentioned as 'what is born or produced from an egg' (*andaj*), 'what is born from a foetus' (*jairaj*) 'produced by growing out, as plants, trees and some lower animals' (*utbhuj*), 'produced from sweat, as lice etc.' (*saitaj*).⁴⁹ *Bani* signifies the four stages of voice from the stirring of the breath to articulate utterance.⁵⁰ Both these explanations are presumably coming from Sanskrit sources. *Nad* in Hindi and Punjabi signifies the conch as well as the sound produced from it; the sound in the body is very likely an allusion to the vital breath.⁵¹ *Shabad* is explained as the Guru, or the instruction of the Guru concentrated in the name of God : *ghariai* means 'should be formed' or 'formed'.⁵² *Purian* refers to fourteen cities, seven celestial and seven sub-terrestrial, or the whole universe.⁵³ *Kot* is '*crores*', meaning that God is praised in various ways by innumerable people⁵⁴. In such footnotes Trumpp appears to make use of his knowledge of Sanskrit, or grammar, or simply the context.

In a number of his footnotes Trumpp tries to get at the literal meaning and then to guess the sense. In the passage starting with the words *ik do jibho lakh hoeh*, the phrase *pati pawriah* or 'the steps of fellowship' is taken to mean 'final emancipation'.⁵⁵ This inference is based on the assumption that the word '*ikis*' (means twentyone and

represents 'absolute truth' because *bih biswai* in Punjabi means 'twenty, twentieths' or 'the whole certainly'. The commentators too explain it as 'the highest degree' (*uttam pad*) or the fourth 'state of the soul' (*turia*), in which there is absolute identity with the Supreme Being. However, Trumpp is not happy with his guess and wonders 'whom Nanak impugns here'. The import of the passage that is missed by Trumpp is mere repetition of praises cannot lead to emancipation : what is needed is self-effacement and the grace of God.'

Occasionally, he can guess the import even when the literal meaning of a "word alludes him. In *guni-nidhan*, *guni* is rendered as 'virtues' or 'qualities' but *nidhan* is rendered as 'abode' and not treasure. Nevertheless, he can infer that the phrase is used for the Supreme Being.⁵⁶ It may be added however, that when Trumpp knows the literal meaning of words it does not follow that he can interpret the lines or passages correctly, or meaningfully.⁵⁷ As much as is 'created' so much is the name is a literal rendering of *jeta kita teta nav*'. Its explanation in the footnote says that to have name is to have destiny; God alone is not subject to destiny. But this explanation does not help us in appreciating the idea. In fact it is misleading, since it implies what is created is subject to annihilation. This is not the idea of *jeta kita teta nao*. Similarly, the translation *punni papi akhan(u) nah(i)* does not clarify the meaning though Trumpp knows the literal meaning of all the words.⁵⁸ *Sachi taksal* is rendered as 'the true mint' but it is taken as metaphor for *sat-sangat*, which is not the import of the passage.⁵⁹ In another note, the equation of *sach khand* with the habitation of Brahma dilutes, the significance of *sach khand* in the *Japuji* because of its reduction to Puranic concept.⁶⁰ A more obvious example of finding an easy way out is Trumpp's understanding of *sito-sita*. The word *sita* for him is simply the proper name Sita, the wife of Rama. The word *sito* is taken to mean cool, refreshed, happy, as 'an allusion to her name'.⁶¹ To a present day scholar the phrase *sito-sita* means something different, having nothing to do with Sita or Rama. It is taken to mean 'sewn' in the sense of 'closely attached to'. In interpreting the word *saram* the choice appeared to be between its Sanskrit and Persian connotations. Trumpp chooses the Sanskrit 'joy, happiness', rejecting the Persian *sharam*. The third possibility, that it stands for 'work, effort', could not thus be considered.⁶²

Trumpp's reference to a Persian usage does not mean that he had any proficiency in that language. This is evident from his explanation of *amar* which he renders as 'rulers'. In the footnote he adds that 'it may be' *amir* (the singular of '*umara*'). At the same time he suggests an alternative translation : instead of 'innumerable rulers who commit/tyranny' it could be 'innumerable give orders of violence'. The primary connotation of *amar*, that is 'order' or 'command', is of secondary importance to Trumpp though it is the only appropriate connotation in the context.⁶³ Similarly, the Persian word *Karm* (kindness, mercy) is taken to mean the Sanskrit *karma* (deed, action) and treated as 'destiny' or works in a former birth.⁶⁴ In the process, the idea of God's grace and its importance in the religious thought of Guru Nanak get lost.

Trumpp's tendency to accept Sanskritic connotations becomes quite clear in some other footnotes. The word *asgah* is rendered as 'unfordable' on the basis of its Sanskritic connotation. But the words *hath hovai asgah* are not clarified by rendering them as 'the unfordable becomes fordable'. The phrase *sara guna*, literally 'lakes of good qualities', is taken by Trumpp to mean *sargun* which to him means 'processing all qualities'. This, he thinks, is an epithet for an Avatar. The word *gah*, meaning 'understanding', is taken to mean 'song'. Consequently, what can be regarded as 'possession of good qualities' gets rendered as 'the songs of the Avatars'.⁶⁵ Elsewhere, *mand*, a bad or an evil person, is treated as *mantra*, so that *mukh salahan mand* comes to mean 'they sing or recite mantras', and not 'even the evil persons begin to sing his praises'.⁶⁶ The word *ajuni* is equated by Trumpp with *ajoni* and taken to mean 'free from the womb'. The word *saibhan* stands for 'birth, production'. Therefore, *ajuni-saibhan* becomes one word, meaning 'not produced from the womb'.⁶⁷ This is a poor substitute for the idea that God is self-existent and does not undergo cycles of death-and-rebirth. *Gurmukh* is taken literally to mean 'from the mouth of the Guru' and *gur* stands for God and also for the Guru who is 'always considered as an Avatar or incarnation of Deity'.⁶⁸

The notes and comments of Trumpp leave the impression that he tended to lean on his knowledge of grammar, Sanskrit and Puranic tradition. He was unfamiliar with the Punjabi idiom, and showed little

appreciation for Persian vocabulary. Consequently, he could explain simple words and phrases for the benefit of the Western reader. But he failed to grasp complex or subtle ideas. Paradoxically, his strength became his weakness when he began to look for traditional ideas in Guru Nanak and not for any new concepts.

III

The literal meaning of words does not necessarily lead to the sense of a line and the literal meaning of lines does not necessarily lead to the import of a passage. A good translator tries to do justice to both the literal meanings of words and lines and the import of a whole passage. This could be done only with an understanding of the significance of Guru Nanak's basic concepts. In order to assess whether or not Trumpp succeeds in striking such a balance we may turn to some whole passage in his translation of the *Japuji*. To avoid repetition, we may take up those passages to which Trumpp has provided no annotation. These obviously would be the passages which he thought were clear to him. The only help provided to the reader is through the addition of words in brackets which are meant to clarify the meaning. For our present purpose we can ignore the brackets.

The first un-annotated passage is rendered as :

By his order are made the forms of all things, his order however cannot be told.

By his order are made the living beings by his order greatness is obtained.

By his order are the high and the low by his order pain and pleasure are set down.

By his order some are pardoned, some are by his order always caused to wander about in transmigration.

Every one is under his order, exempt from his order is no one.

O Nanak ! if one understand his order, he will not speak in self-conceit.⁶⁹

Trumpp appears to be aiming at a literal translation. *Hukam* is rendered as 'order, akar' as forms of all things; *kiha* as 'told' ! *jia* as 'living beings'; '*vadial*' as '*greatness*'; *uttam* as the high and *nich* as 'the low' : *dukh* as 'pain' and *sukh* as 'pleasure'; *bakhsis* as 'pardon';

bhavaiah(i) as caused to wander about in 'transmigration' *hukmai andar sabh ko* as 'every one is under his order'. *bahir hukam na koi* as 'exempt from his order is no one; *bujhai* as 'understand' and *haumai* as 'self-conceit'. It is difficult to contest the literal meanings of words and phrases in this passage. However, the basic thrust of the idea expressed in this passage does not come out.

What is sought to be underlined in this passage is not merely the greatness of God but the realization of his 'omnipotence' by human beings so that they do not attribute things to themselves. The clue to this idea lies in the last line in which *bujhai* is better rendered as 'realized' and *haumai* as 'self-centredness'. This interpretation would harmonize with Guru Nanak's conception of '*Hukam*' and '*haumai*' in the *Guru Granth*.

The second annotated passage in Trumpp's translation of the *Japuji* is.⁷⁰

By having heard his name, truth, contentment and divine knowledge is obtained.

By having heard, is obtained, the merit of the bathing of the sixty-eight Tirathas.

By having heard and reading the name they obtain honour at the threshold of God.

By having heard, meditation comes naturally to them.

O Nanak ! his worshippers are always happy.

By having heard, pains and sins are annihilated.

Here, *suniai* is rendered as 'by having heard his name'; *sat* as 'truth'; *santokh* as 'contentment'; *gian* as 'divine knowledge'; *asnan* as the merit of bathing of tirathas; *parh* as 'reading the name'; *man* as 'honour at the threshold of God'; *sahaj* as 'naturally'; *dhian* as 'meditation'; *bhagat* as 'worshipper'; *vigas* as 'happy'; *dukh* as 'pain' and *pap* as 'sin'. In this translation too the aim is to be literally accurate, but with much less success. The word *sat* in the context is better interpreted as 'charities'. The second line has no verb and, therefore its meaning is left vague. The word *parh* is joined to 'heard' on the one hand and to the 'the name' on the other, whereas in the original it is only repeated as *parh parh*. Consequently, Trumpp misses the literal meaning as well as the import of this line. The word *sahaj* is wrongly translated as 'naturally' and, therefore, the meaning of the line does not

get across. This whole passage is intimately connected with Guru Nanak's conception of the Name. But Trumpp does not seem to be aware of its importance in the thought of Guru Nanak.

Another un-annotated passage reads.⁷¹

If he mind it, he obtains the gate of salvation. If he mind it, he brings about the salvation of his families. If he mind it, he is saved, and saves the disciples of his Guru. If he mind it, O Nanak ! he does not wander about in begging. Such is the name of the Supreme Being. If one mind it he knows it in his heart.

The word *mannai* is translated as 'if he mind it'; *mokh(u)-duar(u)* as 'the gate of salvation'; *parwar* as 'family' and *sadhar(u)* as 'salvation'; *tarai* as 'is saved' and *tarai* as 'saved'; *Gursikhi* as 'disciples of his Guru'; *bhavah(i)* as 'wandering' and *bhikh* as 'begging'; *nam* as 'the name'; *niranjan* as 'the Supreme Being'; *janey* is joined to *mann*; on the one hand and to *man* on the other. The sense of the last line changes. *Gursikh* is treated as one word, the alternative meaning 'the Guru saves his disciples' could not occur to Trumpp. The translation of the passage as a whole at best remains inadequate.

The refrain of the passage given above occurs four times in the *Japuji*. Another of these four passages is un-annotated. it reads.⁷²

If one mind the name, understanding and wisdom is obtained in the heart.

If the mind it, the knowledge of the whole world.

If he mind it, he is not struck in the face.

If he mind it, he does not go with Yama.

Here, *surat(i)* rendered as 'understanding' and *buddh* as 'wisdom'; *suddh* as 'knowledge': *muh(i) chota na khae* as, 'is not struck in the face'; and '*jam ke sath na jai* as 'does not go with Yama'. In the last two lines metaphors are rendered so literally that they do not make any sense. What does it mean to be 'struck in the face'? What is the implication of 'not going with Yama'? Trumpp has nothing to say as if the lines are self-explanatory. Both these lines can be interpreted in different ways. It may be suggested, however, that not to be struck on the face can mean not to receive punishment in the life hereafter. Not to go with Yama can mean release from the transmigratory cycle, or emancipation.

Another passage which is translated by Trumpp without any annotation is the following :⁷³

There is no end to his praises,
 in saying them there is no end.
 There is no end of his works, in his giving there is no end.
 There is no end in seeing his works,
 no end in hearing them.
 No end is known, what counsel is in his mind.
 No end is known, what his form is.
 No end nor limit is known.
 On account of not getting his end,
 how many limit is known.
 On account of not getting his end, how many lament !
 Hid bounds cannot be obtained.
 This end nobody knows.
 If much be said, much more is to be said.
 Great is the Lord, high his place.
 Higher than high is his name.
 If one be so high, he may know this high one.
 So great a one, as he himself is, he himself only knows.
 O Nanak ! by his favourable look and by destiny
 the gift of knowing him is obtained.

This probably is the simplest passage in the *Japuji*. Much of the translation given by Trumpp is literally accurate, but not all. The line 'on account of not getting his end, how many lament' is a little misleading, because the original line simply means 'how many there are who are yearning to understand his limits'. Similarly, the line 'so great a one.....' actually means that in order to know God's greatness one has to be as great (which is impossible). In the last line, which is really of crucial significance in this passage, the word *Karmi* is misunderstood to mean destiny. This is the Persian *karam* which, as we noticed earlier, was confused by Trumpp with the Sanskrit *karma*. The word *karmi* here is meant to reinforce *nadari* to underline the crucial importance of God's grace.

The last un-annotated passage in the *Japuji* is :⁷⁴

His seat are the worlds, his storehouses the worlds.
 Whatever is put down by him in them, is put down

once and for ever.

Having made all things the creator sees them.

O Nanak ! the work of the True one is true, that is real and lasting.

Salutation to him, salutation ! Who is first, spotless, without beginning, having the same dress through all ages.

This is one of the several passages in the Japuji in which the terminology of the Jogis is used in order to show that the right path is not their's but Guru Nanak's. The first line is meant to convey the idea that what is provided by God in all the worlds is inexhaustible. The second line is meant to convey the idea that God looks after his creation, and just as only he truly exists so his creation alone is perfect. The refrain that follows is meant to underline that he alone, and not Shiva or Vishnu or Brahma, should be the object of devotion, he who existed before the beginning, who has no end, and who does not change his form. We can see that Trumpp's translation is neither literally accurate nor meaningful in the context in which this passage occurs.

IV

We noticed earlier that at one place Trumpp fails to perceive that the ideas attributed to Guru Nanak were actually ideas current among his contemporaries. There are some other lines in his translation of the Japuji which can be interpreted in a similar way by the reader. For instance, Guru Nanak may appear to approve of the Pandit reciting the Vedas in 'To thee sing Pandits and Rakahisars who read continually with the Vedas in their hands'.⁷⁵ Similarly, *gurmukh vedang* is rendered as 'from the mouth of the Guru is the Veda'. In another line 'The Guru is Isar, the Gur is Gorakh (Vishnu), Brahma, the Guru is the Mother Parbati'.⁷⁶ The reader may possibly get the impression that Guru Nanak believed in deities other than his God from the line 'By having heard his name, Isar (Shiva), Brahma and Indra have been made'. In the same way the reader may like to infer that Guru Nanak acknowledged the authority of the Brahmanical books from the line 'By having heard, the Shastras, the Smritis. and the Vedas are obtained'.⁷⁷ This may be reinforced by 'Recitations of innumerable books and of the Veda with the mouth'. Legitimacy for Yoga may be seen in 'Innumerable jogs of those, who remain secluded in their

hearts'.⁷⁸ It must be pointed out, however, that in order to put such interpretations on the lines cited above the reader will have to take them out of the context. It is quite clear that Trumpp does not try to distort the meaning deliberately. As elsewhere, in these lines too he tries to give a literal translation to the best of his understanding.

Indeed, Trumpp's objective of remaining literally accurate enables him to record Guru Nanak's attitude towards the traditional Indian beliefs and practices more or less faithfully. The Vedas are not the beliefs and practices more or less faithfully. The Vedas are not the repository of all knowledge in the line 'Having sought the end, the end, they have become tired, the Vedas say one word'⁷⁹. Similarly 'The time is not found out by the Pandits, though it be written out of a Purana'. —The reference here is to the time of the creation of the world. The Puranas are bracketed with the Qur'an : 'the time is not found out by the Kazis, though they write out a document from the Koran'.⁸⁰ There is a more comprehensive statement in a passage that enumerates categories through which attempts are made to describe God's greatness and his attributes. Among these are the Vedas and the Puranas, the learned men and the Brahmans, Indra, the Gopis and Krishna, Shiva, the Siddhas, and the Buddhas. But 'nobody is able to tell his qualities'.⁸¹ The mention of deities and scriptures in multiples undermines the importance of each : There are many winds, waters, fires, many Kans (Krishnas), and Mahes (Shivas). Many Brahmas by whom creation is formed. Many Indras....many disguises of the Devi..... Many Vedas, many worshippers. O Nanak ! there is no end of the account.⁸² Traditional practices too have little merit : 'Tirathas, austerity, mercy, gifts given : If one obtain their merit, it is the honour of a sesam-seed. 'Furthermore, 'If the name of God be heard minded and loved in the heart : he, bathes inwardly as at a Tiratha'.⁸³ In these verses Trumpp tries to remain faithful to the text. The inadequacy or inaccuracy of his translation is not relevant for the present argument. In Trumpp's translation there is no deliberate attempt to minimize Guru Nanak's departure from the traditional beliefs and practices among his contemporaries. The problem lies in his lack of appreciation for the basic concepts of Guru Nanak.

V

Our analysis clarifies quite a few points in Trumpp's translation of the Japuji, which may in fact be relevant for his translation as a whole (though not for his entire work). He was familiar with the principle of internal comparison, but he did use it on any considerable scale. He judged the Sikh tradition on its merit according to his lights but neither the acceptance nor the rejection of that tradition ensured accuracy. He made no deliberate attempt to distort the meaning of the text. However, he appears to have entertained the notion that Guru Nanak was a representative of the Hindu tradition as it was understood in missionary circles during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. This assumption, coupled with his familiarity with the Puranic tradition and his knowledge of Sanskrit, induced him to interpret Guru Nanak's concepts in traditional Hindu terms. Therefore, though he did not consciously minimize Guru Nanak's departure from Hindu beliefs, he failed to appreciate the importance of his basic concepts like the *Nam*, *Shabad*, *Hukam* and the *Nadar*, or the terms like *haumai* and *sahaj* for his religious thought.

There are serious shortcomings in Trumpp's translation. He aims at a literal translation but fails to get at the meaning of words and phrases. His failure to recognize a metaphor when he came upon one was even more frequent. This could arise from his indifferent command over the Punjabi language and its idiom. Consequently, he did not succeed in grasping the essential import of a line or a passage at many places in his translation. However, his shortcomings must be seen in conjunction with the difficulties of his situation. No grammars and dictionaries of Punjabi were available to him. There was no well established tradition of theological studies among the Sikhs at that time. He failed to elicit cooperation from Sikh scholars, either because he offended the Sikhs by his disrespect to the scripture or due to his assumption that he knew better than the Sikh scholars. Then there was the constraint of time and limited financial resources. All these difficulties, coupled with his religious assumption and attitude, made him aggressive in tone and expression. Writing for the Western reader, he did not realize that his work would be read by the Sikhs. His gratuitous remarks on the Sikh Gurus as well as the Sikh scriptures

are denounced the most by his Sikh critics. Today, the basic relevance of his work is for the historiography of Sikh studies.

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2. J.S. Grewal, *Guru Nanak in Western Scholarship*, Shimla : Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1992, 21-27.
3. Barrier, 166-68.
4. *Ibid*, 168-70.
5. *Ibid*, 170-73, 184 & 185.
6. Ernest Trumpp, *The Adi Granth*, New Delhi : Munshiram Manoharlal, 1989, (reprint), 9 n. 2.
7. *Ibid*, 11, n. 2.
8. *Ibid*, 13 n. 8.
9. *Ibid*, 5 n. 2.
10. *Ibid*, 1 n. 2, 3 n. 4, 12 n. 3.
11. *Ibid*, 7 nn. 3 & 7. There are other instances too. Following the Sikh commentators, 'Instructions' in a particular verse are attributed to Narad, though the phrase used is 'Dhu-updesh' (or the instructions of Dhruva) : *Ibid*, 12 n. 5. The commentator's explanation of nirankar as 'one who has no form or colour's is also accepted by Trumpp : *Ibid*, 6 n. 1.
12. *Ibid*, 13 & n. 3.
13. *Ibid*, 6 n. 5.
14. *Ibid*, 10 n. 8. Similarly, Trumpp is right in rejecting 'He himself does and causes to be done' as the interpretation of *sabh apey sachiar* : *Ibid*, 2 n. 4.
15. *Ibid*, 1 n. 5.
16. *Ibid*, 2 n. 1.
17. *Ibid*, 2 n. 3.
18. *Ibid*, 5 n. 1.
19. *Ibid*, 7 n. 5.
20. *Ibid*, 7 n. 5.
21. *Ibid*, 8 n. 1.
22. *Ibid*, 8 n. 2.
23. *Ibid*, 9 n. 6.
24. *Ibid*, 10 n. 6.

25. *Ibid*, 12 n. 1.
26. *Ibid*, 13 n. 7. In this footnote, however, Trumpp appears to give what he heard from the Sikhs only for the reader's information, and not to reject their statement.
27. *Ibid*, 1 n. 3.
28. *Ibid*, 3 n. 6.
29. *Ibid*, 3 n. 9.
30. *Ibid*, 5 n. 3.
31. *Ibid*, 4 n. 2.
32. *Ibid*, 5 n. 4.
33. *Ibid*, 10 n. 7.
34. *Ibid*, 11 n. 3.
35. H.H. Wilson, *The Vishnu Purana : System of Hindu Mythology and Tradition*, Calcutta; Punthi Pustak, 1961, (3rd. edn.) 19nl. This translation was first published in 1840-the edition used by Trumpp. There is some difference in pagination in the third edition.
36. *Ibid*, 39 n. 5.
37. Trumpp, 3 n. 7.
38. *Ibid*, 9 n. 5., Wilson, 38.
39. Trumpp, 10 n. 1; Wilson, 514, n. 21.
40. Trumpp; 10 n. 3; Wilson, 37, 65, 123 & n. 21 & 485.
41. Trumpp, 11 n. 2.
42. *Ibid*, 12 n. 4.
43. *Ibid*, 1 n.6, 2 n. 5; 3 n. 8; 6 n. 6, 9, nn 1, 4 & 7; nn 2 & 5; 13 n. 4.
44. *Ibid*, 6 n. 2.
45. *Ibid*, 3 n. 2.
46. *Ibid*, 4 n. 5.
47. *Ibid*, 4 n. 5.
48. *Ibid*, 7 n. 4. Trumpp's interpretation in note 3 on page 8 is also correct.
49. *Ibid*, 10 n. 4.
50. *Ibid*, 12 n. 6.
51. *Ibid*, 11 n. 1
52. *Ibid*, 13 n. 5.
53. *Ibid*, 1 n. 4
54. *Ibid*, 2 n. 2.
55. *Ibid*, 11 n. 5.
56. *Ibid*, 3 n. 1.

57. *Ibid*, 7 n. 1.
58. *Ibid*, 7 n. 2.
59. *Ibid*, 13 n. 6.
60. *Ibid*, 13 n. 2.
61. *Ibid*, 13 n. 1.
62. *Ibid*, 12 n. 7.
63. *Ibid*, 6 n. 3.
64. *Ibid*, 3 n. 5.
65. *Ibid*, 4 n. 4.
66. *Ibid*, 4 n. 1.
67. *Ibid*, 1 n. 1.
68. *Ibid*, 3 n. 3.
69. *Ibid*, 2.
70. *Ibid*, 4.
71. *Loc cit*.
72. *Ibid*, 4.
73. *Ibid*, 8.
74. *Ibid*, 11.
75. *Ibid*, 10.
76. *Ibid*, 3.
77. *Ibid*, 4.
78. *Ibid*, 6.
79. *Ibid*, 8.
80. *Ibid*, 7.
81. *Ibid*, 9.
82. *Ibid*, 12.
83. *Ibid*, 7.

Ernest Trumpp's Translation of *Guru Granth Sahib* and the Documentary Evidence of Sikh Reaction

Madanjit Kaur

The aim of this paper is to locate authentic historical evidence still untapped for the study of the Sikh reaction to Ernest Trumpp's¹ translation of the *Guru Granth*, the holy scripture of the Sikhs. The paper is intended to be illustrative rather than comprehensive. We present here one document from the storehouse of unlisted documents preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.² The document is in the form of a welcome address presented by the contemporary representative body of the Sikhs, the Khalsa Diwan to Lord Curzon, the Viceroy and Governor General of India on his visit to the province of the Punjab. The document is dated Lahore, 5th April, 1899. The document is printed on silk. This welcome address contains a petition of the Sikhs against the misrepresentative translation of the *Guru Granth Sahib* and makes a request to the Viceroy to have a correct translation of their sacred scripture into English which would be worthy of their religion and race and which would remove the stigma which Trumpp had sought to attach to them for ever.

Conclusions :

The inference derived from the text of the document presented in this study is an authentic evidence of the expression of the injured sentiments of the Sikhs caused by the damaging comments which Trumpp had offered to their Gurus and their sacred scripture in his translation of *Guru Granth* named as *Adi Granth*.

It is also evident that there was a definite majority reaction in 1899 among the Sikhs against Trumpp's translation and predecessors of Lord Curzon were held responsible for the damage done.³

The document bears a testimony of the fact that the English translation of the *Guru Granth Sahib* was the outcome of a planned

scheme and the work was executed through the India Office, who had appointed Trumpp for the assignment.⁴

The significant information revealed by the study is that the British officials were also conscious of the defects of the translation but they would blame India Office for the erroneous work got prepared.⁵

The criticism of Trumpp's translation as reflected in this document bears a clear indication of the serious concern of the Sikhs for the future of the Sikh community.⁶ The document is a historical statement of the fact that the threat posed by Trumpp's defective and disdainful interpretation had to be confronted and proven wrong.

Document

To

His Excellency the Right Honorable,
Lord Curzon of Redleston,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India and its Dependencies.
May it please Your Excellency.

We the members of the Khalsa Diwan, a constitutional body of Sikhs, representing the various Singh Sabhas in the Province and elsewhere, beg deferentially to accord Your Excellency a hearty welcome to our Province.

There is no community or association that has not accorded a joyous welcome to Your Excellency. Throughout the length and breadth of this vast empire a burst of enthusiasm has been excited by Your Excellency's wide sympathies. All classes of people seem to feel the near approach of a new and brighter era in the administration of the Empire.

A different and stronger sentiment sways our feelings at this moment. We welcome you as not only the head of a great empire that has given peace and enlightenment to so many millions of human beings, but the representative of a sovereign whom we love and adore, and to spread whose rule we have shed our best blood.

Many of Your Excellency's illustrious predecessors have felt and expressed the mutual attachment that subsists between the British and the Khalsa. Only recently Sir William Lockhart, our popular Commander-in-Chief replying to an address that was submitted to him

in Rawalpindi, on the 8th of January, 1898, on his return from Tirah, said : "For no race have I a sincere regard than that which I entertain for the Sikhs who as enemies won our admiration half a century ago, and have since then furnished the forces of the Queen with thousands gallant soldiers and men who have shown their heroism wherever there was fighting to be done, in India and on its borders, in China, Afghanistan, Burma and Africa. The splendid conduct of the 15th and 36th Sikhs recently in Tirah has been known throughout the world and has been applauded not only in great Britain and the colonies, but in every country in Europe. May the heroic national spirit of the Khalsa continue to flourish, and in future wars may Sikhs ever be found fighting as trusty comrades, side by side with their British brothers-in-arms." It is not necessary to assure Your Excellency that next to their duty to the Ten Gurus, the Highest ambition of the Sikhs is to serve their beloved Queen-Empress; for they fully believe that Her reign is a reign of peace and good-will to all. And this feeling is reciprocated by our British fellow subjects too. We allude with satisfaction to the raising of a memorial by the Government, and another by the Anglo-Indian Community in honour of our brothers who fell fighting at Saragarhi in the recent Tirah campaign.

Our community has, in common with others, received many benefits during the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty, but Sikhs, as we stated in our address to His Honour Sir Mackworth Young, needed internal organisation for their better advancement, and specially for their religious improvement. In order to propagate the true different localities, and, the Khalsa Diwan, the controlling body, composed of the representatives of the Sabhas, was organised. The Sikhs realize their true position, and therefore, the general aim among them is to preserve their distinctive character according to the express injunctions of their Tenth Guru. Unfortunately they were handicapped in their efforts for education and, enlightenment, one of the reasons being that in the mass the community is poor, and another that primary education has not been imparted in their mother-tongue. To meet the pressing want of education attempts were made to support the establishment of an institution of our own which might impart both secular and religious instruction to the Sikhs. There were so many obstacles in the

way that the Khalsa Diwan might have been quite unable to achieve these objects, had not their efforts been encouraged by the Government; and Your Excellency will be pleased to hear that under the kind patronage of Sir James Lyall, the late Lieutenant-Governor, and the Rulers of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Kapurthala States, the Khalsa Diwan has been able to have a Khalsa College which, it is hoped, will suit the educational requirements of the Sikhs. We are very grateful to Sir William Rattigan who is the President of the Khalsa College Council and other notable Englishmen who have evinced hearty interest in our education.

We beg to bring under Your Excellency's notice a matter which seriously affects our personal reputation as well as that of our religion among the civilized races of the world. In 1869 Sir Donald Macleod, an enlightened Lieutenant-Governor of this Province, represented to the India office that it was desirable to have an English translation of our sacred books made for general information and also with the special object of being useful to British Officers brought into official connection with the Sikhs. The India Office at once acted on Sir Donald Macleod's suggestion, and Dr. Trumpp, a German, was appointed translator. At that time, for reasons into which we need not enter, he could not obtain good *Gyanis* or interpreters of our sacred books and indeed he seems to have been fairly contented with his own interpretations and to have paid little regard to the traditional renderings of the hymns of our Gurus and saints. The results has been that, as we informed His Excellency, the Earl of Dufferin in 1888, "the translation made by Dr. Trumpp, who was employed by the India Office for the purpose, is bristling with sentences altogether wide of the meaning, so much that one regrets the useless labour and large amount of money spent in vain."

Dr. Trumpp's translation is unidiomatic and, we are told, unintelligible in many cases even to Englishmen. But this is not the worst. Dr. Trumpp has cruelly misrepresented our Granth Sahib, our holy Gurus, and our Religion which we so prize. He has spoken in very offensive terms of the language of our sacred volume and says that in proportion to its size it is perhaps the most shallow and "empty book that exists." We cannot conceal from Your Excellency that the obloquy thus attached to our religion is an object of the deepest concern to us

and this result having been, though indirectly, obtained through governmental action, we now pray Your Excellency to have a correct translation of our Sacred Scriptures made into English which will be worthy of the stigma which Dr. Trumpp sought to attach to us for ever.

We desire to bring to Your Excellency's notice the obligation conferred on our race by a retired member of the Civil Service. Your Excellency may perhaps have heard of the immense service that Mr. Macauliffe is doing to our creed by rendering our Scriptures into English and enabling the English speaking races of the world to form an idea of our monotheistic faith.

In your address to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, at Calcutta, on the 1st February, Your Excellency said "planted as we have been by providence upon the throne of the Indies, we are trustees for the world of a literature, an archeaology, a history, and an art those are among the priceless treasures of mankind. For nearly three thousand years there has been a succession of kingdoms, dynasties, races and religions in India, all of them leaving relics of some sort, many of them relics of the highest value which it is incumbent upon us to examine, to elucidate and to conserve.....During my time of office I mean to do whatever lies in my power to encourage research, to promote study and to safeguard the relics of the past as a part of our imperial obligation to India.".....The last sentence of Your Excellency's speech just quoted has encouraged us to respectfully invite Your Excellency's attention to the highly important work that we propose. When Your Excellency so warmly vouchsafed your patronage to the "relics of the Past" we feel sure the translation of our Sacred Scriptures which are believed in by the race, the fortune of whose followers has been in the words of Lord Dufferin "incorporated with that of the British Empire in India," will receive greater encouragement at Your Excellency's hands.

We crave leave to also express our sincere thanks to His Honour Sir Mackworth Young, our popular Lieutenant-Governor, who has always evinced keen interest in our welfare.

Your Excellency has arrived in our midst at a time of universal joy in the homes of Sikhs. Your Excellency will be glad...that the 12th of April, 1899, is the day of Khalsa Jubilee. On that day the Khalsa Panth will have passed two hundred years. It is two hundred years since

that Guru Gobind Singh laid the foundation of our Panth, gave Amrit (immortal water) to the lowliest and raised them to the position of the highest. We are holding rejoicings in memory of that glorious day, and in this state of mind, we repeat our welcomes to Your Excellency and pray to *Akal Purkh* (The Timeless One) to grant you health and happiness and a career of the highest usefulness, both to India and your parent country.

We beg to remain,

Lahore :
April 5th, 1899

Your Excellency's
Dutiful Servants,
(Sd/-)

(Courtesy; Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

References

1. A learned Scholar of Sanskrit, Prakrit and Northern Indian Vernaculars, Dr. Ernest Trumpp (b. 1828 AD) was a German Christian missionary. When India Office contacted him for the translation, he was a Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Tübingen, Germany. Trumpp started his work towards the close of 1869. He visited Punjab in 1870. After putting in seven years of hard labour, Trumpp could complete only a portion of the work which was published under the title *The Adi Granth* or *The Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs* from London in 1877. No doubt Trumpp introduced the Sacred Book of the Sikhs not only to the English speaking outside India, but to a great many of our country men who could not read it in original Gurmukhi. But his derogatory remarks on the Holy Book and his erroneous account of the Sikh Gurus (given in the Introductory Essays) reflect his bias against the Sikh faith and is a documentary proof of his superficial knowledge on the subject.
2. A copy of this document had been procured through Mr. C.S. Chan Sandhu, Coventry, England. The text of the document is appended to this article.
3. See copy of the text, para 7.
4. Photostat copy of the text, paras 6 and 7.
5. *Ibid.*, paras 6 lines 12-15.
6. *Ibid.*, paras 5, 6 and 7.

Mul-Mantra : Essence of Gurbani

Taran Singh

Once, Guru Gobind Singh, with one foot in the stirrup of his blue steed, like king Janaka, asked if any Sikh could recite the whole of the *Guru Granth* to him, before he got astride his horse. To the surprise of all, one Sikh who understood the mind of the Guru, came forward and uttered : *Ek Oamkar Sat(i)Gur Prasad(i)* and the Guru had, meanwhile, mounted the horse. The Guru rejoicingly blessed the Sikh and agreed that basic teaching of the *Guru Granth* was *Ek Oamkar Sat(i) Guru Prasad(i)* only, while the entire volume was the exposition of this fundamental doctrine. Thus an axiom grew that the rest of the text of the *Mul-Mantra* expounds the *Ek Oamkar* and the entire body of the *Guru Granth* gives exposition of the doctrines propounded in the *Mul-Mantra*. Perhaps, it is for this very reason that every chapter (*Raga*) and each 'Canto' or 'Passage' (a block of hymns in the *Raga*) is superimposed by the *Mul-Mantra* text, complete or abridged.

2. The originally of the Sikh philosophy or teaching lies in the 'composition' or the integrated form of the *Mul-Mantra* which has seven distinct parts (may be, fourteen parts, as some would believe). Considered separately, one by one, each of the seven principles of the Mantra has been preached and discussed elsewhere, in Indian and non-Indian religious literature; but considered as an integrated composition, the principles or doctrines of the *Mul-Mantra* as put in here, in the *Guru Granth*, are not to be found anywhere, as such, and much less, in the same sequence and order. Thus, these doctrines, put in the same sequence and order, have shaped the Sikh way of life, besides their philosophy, and consequently the historical evolution of Sikhism. As was the seed (*mul*), so has grown the plant of Sikhism.

3. The seven doctrines or principles of the *Mul-Mantra* are like this :

<i>Ek Oamkar</i>	Unity, Unity in diversity, advaita.
<i>Sat(i)nam(u)</i>	Reality, Reality of the appearance, Truth manifested.

<i>Karta Purakh(u)</i>	Creativity, consciousness, conscious creativeness.
<i>Nirbhau Nirvair(u)</i>	Equality, Dignity, non-contradiction.
<i>Akal Murat(i)</i>	Beauty, Eternal Beauty, Personality.
<i>Ajuni Saibham</i>	Non-dependence, Sovereign, Freedom,
<i>Gur Prasad(i)</i>	Culture, cultivation of Personality, sweetness and light.

The supreme Reality is one and indivisible, its manifestation and the form of creation is real, not illusory, the Supreme Reality is personified consciousness which is creative and is eternally progressing; the Supreme Reality admits no contradiction or dichotomy but is the guarantee of equality and dignity, it is a personified existence full of beauty and is eternal; for its existence it is not dependent upon another source, rather, it is non-dependent, sovereign and free; the supreme personality is the essence of sweetness and light which is the essence of perfection. Each doctrine has two aspects, the transcendent and the immanent. Thus, for mankind the *Mul-Mantra* holds the ideal of unity, reality, creativity, equality, beauty, freedom and culture. These concepts can be allocated to metaphysics, *Ek Oamkar*, philosophy, *Sat(i)nam(u)*, religion, *Karta Purakh(u)*, sociology, *Nirbhau, Nirvair(u)*, aesthetics, *Akal Murat(i)*, political idealism. *Ajuni Saibham*, and culture, *Gur Prasad(i)*. This is the representation of idealism of life. These concepts promote life and lead to perfection.

4. These seven postulates which are positive, imply the seven negatives, as a matter of course, which are plurality, illusoriness, nescience, dichotomy, transitoriness, bondage and darkness. Diversity, polytheism, plurality of gods and goddesses, advaita of Jiva and Brahmn of *jiva* and *jagat* (matter), etc., are the forms of plurality; that the world is a dreamy illusoriness, it is non-existent or it only an appearance, are the forms of illusion; that the creation is accidental or it is eternal or co-existent with the Supreme Reality are the forms of nescience; that gradation or divisions of mankind are there and they are antagonistic to one another are the forms of dichotomy; that all existence is subject to change and decay is the form of transitoriness; that life is bondage or transmigration and there is no transcending it, are the forms of bondage, and that imperfection is the rule, is the form

of darkness. These aspects or concepts are the very negation of life and destroy or retard life.

5. Each word of the *Mul-Mantra* is a conceptual term and has been repeated hundreds and thousands of times in key-positions in the verses and hymns of the *Guru Granth*. This situation commands that every verse of the scripture must be interpreted in terms of the *Mul-Mantra*. Again, the profuse condemnation of the negative concepts such as *Maya*, *Dubidha*, *Trikuti*, *Haumai*, *Hau*, *Duja*, etc. suggests that the Supreme Reality is one and only one and duality or plurality is not to be entertained in any form. If the Oneness or Unity stands, the remaining concepts of the *Mul-Mantra* evidently are upheld, for reality, being one, must be the Creator and the creation must emerge out of it alone or go back to it alone. If the Reality is one, it must be timeless, it is all-pervading and perfect.

6. Leaving aside the major (longer) works, there are about five thousand hymns including padas (poems of 2 to 7) stanzas, *ashtpadis* (8 stanza poems), *chhants*, etc. In the *Guru Granth*, the hymns or padas are mostly lyrical poems in which the soul is yearning to meet the one ultimate Absolute and is struggling to be rid of the duality or plurality that has come with ego, illusion, maya and ignorance. There is urge for Union with God in the padas. Thus they accept only the One as Reality and meeting the Absolute will be a union worth the name. The *ashtpadis* are mostly didactic poems urging upon the mind to get rid of the duality, illusion and ignorance, and meditate on the Name which would lead to union with the Absolute. The *chhants*, generally, sing of the spiritual bliss that is experienced when union with the Absolute Oneness is attained. Most of the slokas (verses, couples) are critical of the life-pattern that is bound to come with the ignorance that leads to duality plurality, immoral and unethical living, futile ritualism, improper worship of idols, superstitious practices, socio-political degradation, etc. and thus turn the mind to the One Absolute.

7. All the major compositions of the *Guru Granth* are of the philosophical nature and form. Each one of them invariably, gives the exposition of one or more concepts of the *Mul-Mantra*. This examination, as given below, will provide evidence for the proposition :

(a) The Jap(u) of Guru Nanak (*Guru Granth*, pp. 1-8) conceives the ideally integrated and evolved man with such graces or virtues as

chastity, sat(i), patience, understanding, devotion contentment, humility, concentration, etc. which denote cultivation of man. Thus cultivation, points out of *Jap(u)*, requires the understanding of the Supreme Reality (*sodar*), Cosmic Order (*hukam*), or Will (*raza*) including the creation *patala patal* and the principles of creation and of the self (conscience) or psyche with all training of the emotions, intellect and spirit through the Guru's shabad and the repetition of the Name. That is, the *Jap(u)* interprets the concepts of *Ek Oamkar*, *Sat(i)nam(u)*, *Karta Purak(u)*, *Gur Prasad(i)*, etc.

(b) The 'Barahmah' (Raga Majh, pages 133-36) of Guru Arjan holds that a person who is to be eternally attuned to the Supreme Reality, requires the understanding of the bondage of karmas, done in nescience, or ignorance, for the lust of unreal may or objects of transitory existence and has to overcome them. This he can do by understanding that the Supreme Reality is all-pervading and creative and by shunning all plurality, illusoriness, lethargy, etc.

(c) The theme of 'Bawan-Akhari' (Raga Gauri, pages 250-62) by Guru Arjan is that not enlightenment by the Guru can liberate and emancipate man from the ignorance and the bondage of duality or plurality, as it is egoism. The Unity of the Supreme Reality is the theme of this long composition.

(d) The 'Sukhmani' (Raga Gauri, pages 262-96) of Guru Arjan preaches that perfection can be attained by meditating upon the Perfect which is Supreme Reality. Brahmagyani or the knower of the Reality alone knows that from the One Transcendent the entire creation has emerged and the Transcendent is immanent in it, while it is sustained by His Grace. So, this composition is the study of the *Ek Oamkar*, *Sat(i)nam(u)*, *Karta Purakh(u)* and *Gur Prasad(i)* aspect of the *Mul-Mantra*.

(e) The 'Thiti' (Raga Gauri, pages 296-300) of Guru Arjan rejects, the dvait (duality), the three gunas, etc., and upholds the *Ek Oamkar*, i.e. Oneness of Reality. The composition further holds that the Vedas and the six shastras uphold the Oneness and not plurality.

(f) The 'Anand' (Raga Ramakali, pages 917-22) has as its theme the spiritual bliss of man which comes to him as the Guru enlightens him about the Oneness of God, rejecting and eliminating ego, sensuousness, illusory maya, carnal pleasures, through etc. for him.

(g) The '*Oamkar*' (*Raga Ramkali*, pages 929-38) of Guru Nanak tells that *Oamkar* or the One Reality is the source of the triune of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, of all manifestation or creation, of all time and space, of the Vedas and the Scriptures. The Oneness of God is indivisible and hence all divisions of caste, creed, *varna* or *ashrama*, created by man, are false and misconceived in illusion, *maya*.

(h) The '*Sidh-Gost(i)*' (*Raga Ramkali*, pages 938-46) of Guru Nanak maintains that all creation is real because it has its ground in the One Real and that man should live the worldly life by transcending illusion, ego, duality and carnal pleasures meditation on the Name.

(i) The '*Barahmah*' (*Raga Tukhari*, pages 1107-10) of Guru Nanak maintains that for remaining eternally attuned to the Reality, one must transcend the duality and illusion and by repetition of the Name get the true enlightenment.

(h) All the twenty-two *Vars* of the *Guru Granth* which are major compositions, each covering 101-5 pages, have the same theme. The pattern of the *Var*-theme is that the Reality is one and the creation emerges out of that Reality under the will and law of the Supreme Reality. However, man strays away from the Reality on account of his ignorance and the impact of *maya* or ego; the Guru reclaims him to God, he attains bliss by realizing the Reality.

8. More detailed examination of the hymns or the longer works of the *Guru Granth* is not possible in the short span of such a paper. That the *Mul-Mantra* should influence the entire course of thinking of the contributions to the *Guru Granth*, is natural, if we know that it is not taken to be a human composition but a direct revelation to Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. God uttered this Mantra when He commissioned Guru Nanak to preach the 'Name' to the ailing humanity. The founder Guru and his successors interpreted and re-interpreted only the *Mul-Mantra* in their compositions and utterances. It was their mission.

9. Needless to say that in the course of history, the entire approach of the Sikhs towards life, patterned on the doctrines or the concept of Unity, has led to castlessness, unorthodoxy, simplicity, frankness, straightliving, freedom from ambiguity, superstition and perplexity. The belief of the reality of the worldly existence has given them their zest of life, struggle and perseverance. The doctrine of creative

consciousness has inspired them with creative activity, planning and work. Their political, moral and social concepts include justice, equality, fearlessness, freedom, self-determination and sovereignty, bases for which are provided by *Nirbhau*, *Nirvair(u)*, *Ajuni* and *Saibham*.

The tenets of the Mul-Mantra have great impact on the Sikh way of life. They are the source of their inspiration.

Philosophical Naturalism and *Gurbani*

Wazir Singh

In this age of bewildering diversity, in the fields of philosophy and religion as in other areas, interpretation of a scripture is bound to cross the frontiers of conventional orthodoxy. In the case of the holy *Guru Granth*, hardly has any interpreter ventured to suggest that the compositions enshrined in it do not conform to a definitive pattern of thought, combining a firm theistic faith with the objective of the spiritual advancement of man. Yet, the authors of the *Bani*, poet-philosophers as they were, themselves non-conformists and unconventional in their outlook. This applies more particularly to Guru Nanak and Bhagat Kabir—whose poetry constitutes the core of the *Guru Granth's* thought-content.

Sikhism may quite justifiably be described as a protestant religion, with the Gurus as the torch-bearers of a renaissance in the Punjab. Granted that their metaphysical thesis, as it were, broadly affirmed an absolute, supernatural Being, both transcendent and immanent, yet one finds that within the boundaries of this idealistic framework, the Gurus and Bhaktas of the *Guru Granth* gave expression to their insights about the cosmos, the order of nature and the human world, in fairly naturalistic terms. A creative interpretation of the text, departing from the conventional exposition known as *tika-kari*, would reveal those features of the compositions that seem all the more significant in the context of the current search for philosophic understanding. Of course, the *qudrat* of Guru Nanak and other like-minded poets is not completely autonomous; it is subject to its author, the *Qadir*, who manifests his essence through the cosmic existence.

The Variegated Nature

A profound and elegant presentation of nature as the physical phenomena, is given in Guru Nanak's *Var Asa*, equating all that is perceived, enjoyed and contemplated, with the pervasive and comprehensive *qudrat*.¹ The hymns recounts the objects seen and

sounds heard, human fears and pleasures; countless forms on the earth and in the skies; scriptures of various faiths and their deliberations. The poet testifies to the presence of nature in all these. The hymn further refers to the acts of eating, drinking and dressing; to all worldly affections; to the colourful phenomena of life and its species; to virtue and vice, to ego and pride; to air and water, fire and earth. This description, by itself and in itself, is a poetic transcript of the philosophic conception of nature as the sole category of reality, postulated in modern naturalism. The point of departure is the attribution, in the hymn, of the powers of nature to the supernatural Master, whose ordinance prevails in the order of nature.

Guru Nanak, in another hymn, has given an artistic account of the cosmic principle that governs the objects and forces of nature.² Here again, the elements and the rivers, angels and seers, the sun and the moon—all are depicted as performing their assigned roles under the discipline of the supreme Ordainer. This combination of the naturalistic content with the mystical and transcendent reference, is one of the essential characteristics of the compositions of the *Guru Granth*. As if the poet, in dealing with the aspects of the established order of nature and human society, is automatically reminded of the Author of this order, and proceeds to pay his homage to the creativity of the Divine.

In terms of purely idealistic philosophy, the order of nature is nothing more than a manifestation or externalization of the absolute Spirit. Its physical appearance is correlated to human understanding with all its limitations of here-and-now. In essence, the world is of the nature of *experience*, that is, in the supra-empirical sense of the term. Here, the natural is reduced to the supernatural. The metaphysical import of *Gurbani*, with its concepts of Divine Will, Creativity and Omnipresence, fits in well with the idealist position. As opposed to this, the reductionist operation performed by the materialist, who seeks to explain the mental and the spiritual in terms of matter-in-motion, goes contrary to the perspective of *Gurbani*. The Gurus seem to view nature as a creative force with its own regulations and procedures, but ultimately acting as the organ or agency of the divine Creator, whose writ is final. The world of nature is not illusory on this view, since the self-expression of the realmost Being, cannot but be real itself.³ Even if the world were a sport or mere play, it is the real play of the

Divine ⁴ This world is the abode of Truth; the True one resides herein.⁵

Facts and Values

Comprehension of fact and pursuit of value are among the important functions of the human psyche. The Gurus, however, did not emphasize the mere grasp or cognition of fact, since it was not their business, as spiritual leaders of men, to do so. But the pursuit of value naturally became the object of their most vigorous emphasis. The supreme mission of their life seemed to promote intuitive awareness of a value that transcended other values of human life, both high and low, narrow and wide. This most comprehensive, all-transcending value that the human soul could rely upon for ultimate support, was doubtlessly the Divine itself. Emotionally pursued, it became the object of the highest devotion and realization; rationally conceived, it served as the farthest limit of comprehension, namely, Brahm or the Absolute. It could also be designated as the supreme, eternal, spiritual Reality, or *Sat-Chit-Anand* of the Indian conception.

Thus visualized, the Divine acquires the status of the highest value that man can experience in the inmost depths of his person. It may be viewed as a Being greater than man, with whom man could establish a personal, intimate contact, should he so will. Such a conception of the Deity does not conflict with the contemporary naturalistic thinking. God is accepted as the immanent reality of the universe, who is *with* all that forms part of nature. He may be viewed as the spiritual dimension of all reality, or the highest single factor within the totality of existence. In the philosophy of Whitehead, the 'consequent nature' of God evolves and develops with the developmental process of the actual world, although Whitehead posits a 'Primordial nature' of God too, which like the Absolute of Shankar is the perfect, eternal, ineffable super-reality, identified with the realm of possibility. It is this latter description of a God above God, in the entire speculative venture, that is distasteful to the naturalist. He is reluctant to entertain a theory which conceives God as the designer and planner of the universe, or as its ultimate ground and support.

In *Gurbani*, the supernatural, transcendent aspect of the supreme reality is characterised as the featureless void or *sunni*, as also the Formless or *Nirankar* in the ever-abiding state of *Sach-Khand*. In

human terms, it is the highest state of spiritual merger of the finite in the infinite—a unique, extraordinary experience of man's inmost self, not capable of being shared or verified by another. Thus interpreted, the supremely real is, after all, a matter of personal, individual experience. From the naturalist's standpoint, such a view of the 'supreme reality' or its 'realization' issues forth from the metaphysical insight of man; it is a product of this theorizing—an adventure of the human mind, like all other concepts and doctrines, including those concerning the Genesis and cosmic evolution, creativity of God and immortality of the soul. And what originates in the mind and imagination of man, is a *fact* of nature like all *facts*. Man himself belongs to nature, so do all his concepts and values, as well as his Deity.

The Mystery of Nature and Supernature

According to the Gurus, Truth can be apprehended by the mind, which is the seat of degeneration as well as regeneration of man. The central thesis of their compositions stands out as the contemplating grasp of Truth that lifts the individual from a state of enlightenment. Guru Nanak's *Japuji* itself is contemplation of Truth; its opening rhyme clinches the issue :

Truth, when nothing else was
 Truth, when process of time starts
 Truth, what the present sustains
 Truth, O Nanak, shall ever remain.⁶

In another context, the Guru builds up a cosmological theory taking Truth as the origin and source of all creation : From Truth arises air, which in turn gives rise to water; from water are formed the three regions of the universe.⁷ The implication, that Guru Nanak acknowledged the operation of laws in nature seems unmistakable here. But the Divine Ordinance prevailing in nature is not completely within the human grasp. This is asserted time and again in *Gurbani*, as for instance :

No measure of the expanse of
 Thy ordinance is possible;
 None can attempt a full account of that.
 Even if a hundred poets assemble,

Little would they fathom, coming to grief in the end.
 Its true value defies all estimates,
 We simply rely on the hearsay.⁸

The state of affairs, symbolically expressed in *Gurbani* as the 'indescribable description' (*akath katha*), or the knowability of the unknown, is aptly summed up by the author of the well-known *chaupai*, who said :

The varying degrees of intellect we have,
 Various descriptions we give of Thee, accordingly.⁹

This theme of Truth—and its partial apprehension—is shared by contemporary naturalistic philosophy. The real, essential nature of Truth is hidden from man's view, like a veiled goddess. But the most enigmatic feature of this mystery is that the enigma is soluble. All endeavour of human knowledge is directed to the gradual uncovering of the secrets of both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic aspects of nature. The discovery of the truths proceeds step by step, in a piecemeal fashion, unlike the instant revelation of all secrets claimed by the mystic. The naturalist does not deny the veracity of the holy experience or the divine illumination; nor does he deny the benefits accruing of inquiry. He treats nature as the home of man, if not of an unknown immaterial spirit.

Traditionally, religion and naturalism have not been friendly to each other. But the modern version of naturalism is no longer an anathema to religion, particularly with its openness to spiritual experience and values that transcend the mundane level of existence. Human life is capable of acquiring ever new meaning, both higher and deeper, which would serve to refashion man's faculties and produce a regenerate individual. If the goal of religion is to transform ordinary beings into idealized souls, the aim of naturalism is no less than the shaping of transfigured men and women. The aesthetic realm of *vismad* or spiritual delight, depicted by Guru Nanak, is the ecstatic realm wherein the mental faculties of man—his vision, intelligence and reason, all are reconstituted into an elevated awareness belonging to angles and seers.¹⁰

The poets of the *Guru Granth* sing of the mystery that is beyond nature, yet within the bounds of nature. The naturalist is enamoured of the mysterious glory of nature itself—calling to be unveiled at the

hands of man. Nature is the common ground between them. It sets limits to the vision of the philosopher of nature, but allows the poetic vision of the seer to pierce through all limits. The naturalist, in measuring up the spiritualist, might discover those features of the order of nature and of the spirit of man—which have inspired mystics and visionaries like the composers of *Gurbani* to look beyond nature.

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Importance of *Guru Granth Sahib* as *Guru*

Narain Singh

The theme of the article, as suggested by its title, is in the form of a poser that calls for an answer, covering issues like these—the *Granth Sahib*; the *Guru Granth Sahib*; the closing of personal guruship etc. It would be helpful if we quote from Guru Nanak and some of his successors to indicate the direction in which the thought was to move and in this way, stimulate understanding.

Here are some quotations from Guru Nanak, first :

The Lord filleth the Guru with Himself and, then through him, the Word is made manifest, for the regeneration of mankind.¹

Again :

The Lord placeth Himself in the true Guru, who proclaimed the Lord's Message (embodied in His Word) to the whole humanity.²

The quotations given so far, speak of the human *Guru*, who had first realised the Lord and His Word, embodying the Lord's Message, that had to go to the world through this *Guru* for the emancipation of mankind. The Message was there in the holy Book called the *Granth Sahib*, but it could go flawlessly, through the Guru guide, otherwise :

He who meeteth not the true Guru destroyes himself in the sea of life.³

The Word may be there for the people, but flawless guidance can come from the satguru alone. Again says Guru Nanak :

O Lalo, as the Divine Word of wisdom cometh to me form the Lord the same I relate to the people.⁴

Here, the implication again is that the true *Guru* must be the guide for conveying the Lord's Message, to the people as given in His Word, in the truest form.

We shall now quote Guru Amar Dass, thus :

There is one Word (the Word of the Lord) and there is one Guru (Guru Nanak), through whom the Lord's Word had come (the other nine Gurus being the images of Guru Nanak, speaking on his authority). Therefore, O Sikhs of mine, ponder ye always on the One Word for guidance in life, through the true, Guru⁵

And Guru Ram Dass says :

The Word (of the Lord) is the Guru and the Guru (in human form i.e. Guru Nanak, through whom the Word had come) is the Word. The Nectar essence (of virtue, wisdom, truth & beauty etc.) is in the Word, the term '*sare*' here representing '*sar(u)*' i.e., 'Essence'. When on Guru's Words (the Word of Guru Nanak, the Word of the Lord) speaketh its wisdom and the devoted servant accepteth it (i.e. enshrineth it in his heart, the living human Guru liberateth the devotee from the shackles of *Maya*, ego etc.⁶

The translation above of the two lines of Guru Ram Dass, has been deliberately supplemented by additions here or there, so as to make their suitability intelligible. We should remember that at the time he had uttered the line, he did not or rather could not refer to *Granth Sahib* (the holy Book) as *Guru Granth Sahib*, which had not yet compiled even. The compilation of *Granth Sahib* by Guru Arjan Dev came in 1604 and its installation of Guruship by Guru Gobind Singh, some centuries after. However, *Granth Sahib* was not to be different from *Guru Granth Sahib* at any time. The *gurbani* was always Word of Guru Nanak, the Word of the Lord, that had come to us through Guru Nanak, we are only embodying the principle of Guruship in two phases : (i) Guruship under the personal guidance of Guru Nanak and his images (his successors); the Word of Guru Nanak being propagated for humanity through the human Gurus; (ii) the closing of personal Guruship had come for the simple reason that guidance of a person of the stature of Guru Nanak could not be a cheap phenomenon, that could be carried on for all time and therefore if and all-time guidance was desired, provisions for it had to be made. And Guru Gobind Singh did close human Guruship by installing the Sikh *Panth* after him, the *Granth Sahib* becoming *Guru Granth Sahib*. Now we shall take up how Guru Nanak, through whom the Word had come,

was him if the Word, as stated in the first line of Guru Ram Dass. For this we have an illuminating statement of the 10th Guru addressed to Bhai Nand Lal thus :

To measure me, O Nand Lal, thou shouldst listen with rapt attention that I have three forms-the *Nirgun*, the *Sargun* and the *Gur-Shabad*.⁷

We are told that the Guru, though human in form, has achieved the attributes of both the *Nirgun* and the *Sargun* Lord. The implication is that the meditation on the Lord can start on the *Sargun* aspect of the Lord i.e. on the Personal God as only this kind of worship can engage the mind then. In this way, the object of worship in the Lord as a person that possesses moral, spiritual and intellectual qualities of the highest order. The fact of the matter is that the embodied human mind finds it rather impossible to find attention on anything that cannot be visualised in any concrete terms. Thus, the Lord, as person is, for the soul, a fundamental necessity. And realisation of the *Nirgun* comes later when through awakening he is able to go beyond the material existence and the soul comes face to face with itself i.e. it discovers its true self. It is going to the state of *Sehaj*, the state of self discovery when nothing can stand between the Supreme self and the self of man. In the same way, Guru Nanak had passed through both the *Sargun* and the *Nirgun* on realising Him and had acquired the qualities of both the *Sargun* and the *Nirgun* and his Word was the Word of the Lord to be utilised for the services of Lord. The article before us has to elaborate all these points otherwise there will be utter chaos and confusion, for instance, the Namdharis who continue to call themselves Sikhs about the concept even in the Sikh ranks. There are, without accepting *Guru Granth Sahib* as their *Guru*. As against this, there are devotees who idolise it to the extent that produces unsavoury reactions in the minds of the more enlightened and knowledgeable among them. And we have sects, outside the pale of Sikhism who openly declare that it is all idol-worship. Let us add that this varied thinking is not restricted to India, it has gone beyond too. We give here an excerpt from Ripley's 'Believe it or not' -3rd series-page 134 originally published by Simon Schuster. Inc. 1, West 39th Street, New York, U.S.A. The entry is entitled as Mr. Book and reads :

The most revered book in the World is the Granth Sahib

(literally Mr. Book'). It is the holy book of the Sikhs, a religious sect of India. This book is treated as though it were a living oriental King. It has a retinue of servants who fan it all day with golden handed fans of peacock feathers. An orchestra plays sweet music before it to banish boredom. Sweets are offered to it, continuously, for its sustenance. The famous Golden Temple of Amritsar, centre of the Sikh religious worship, was built for the express purpose of housing this book. The temple is of marble encased in heavily gild copper and cost (£) 40,000,000 to build it. It is the costliest book cover in the World.

We need not find fault with the compilers, for this kind of presentation of *Guru Granth Sahib*. We should simply pity them and in fact, pity ourselves, first, for not having adequately and concisely propagated as to what *Guru Granth Sahib* really represents. It is true that it is the most revered Book (*Granth*) in the World but the compilers are totally ignorant as to why it is so, and all the things said above by them are born out of total ignorance of the Sikh technique of expressing devotion to God, to their *Gurus*, to their sacred Books and even to their sacred places, such as Harimandar Sahib, Akal Takht Sahib, Hazur Sahib, Patna Sahib etc. All religious books in the world are treated by the followers as holy and sacred but for the Sikhs, this Holy Book, called *Guru Granth Sahib*, has an unparalleled specially of its own, which is not thought of claimed anywhere else in its totally, and this we are bringing out here, in the elaboration of this article. The term 'Sahib' seems to have been understood by the compilers as Master and the 'living Oriental King' and for '*Granth Sahib*' has been deduced from it, and then the same is converted into 'Mr Book', the term 'Guru' appearing nowhere. It is forgotten that the name of this Holy Book is not merely *Granth Sahib*, it is *Guru Granth Sahib*. The so-called 'retinue of servants' are some of the devotees, who have certain ceremonial duties to perform, as is done in every devotional exercises; and it is the musicians who play music, singing the glories of the Lord to benefit the congregation, the *Sadh Sangat*, as it is called, gathering at the place for enriching themselves spiritually. They come with folded hands and bended knees to signify respectful devotion to this living *Guru*, they recognise in *Guru Granth Sahib*. It should

be remembered that the singing of the Gurus hymns, in accompaniment with musical instruments, called *Kirtan*, it is the most important aspect of Sikh teachings. It represents the Name-concept and is done not for the sake of *Guru Granth Sahib* but entirely for the *Sangat*, the *Guru Granth Sahib* being only the container of the hymns, the Gurbani, as it is called. And to say that sweets are offered to *Guru Granth Sahib* continuously or the Temple was built for the express purpose of housing the Book, only shows the fantastic ignorance of the compiler.

We shall, however, come back to the theme of this article. In this connection, we have first to point out that the *Guru* disciple relationship had already existed in the land, long before Guru Nanak appeared on the Indian scene. It had found expression in the *Upanishads*, the *Gita*, the *Ramayana* and other scriptures of the Hindus. For instance, Shri Rama Chandra had declared, as indicated in the *Tulsi Ramayana*, centuries earlier, thus :

The sea of the life cannot be crossed without the *Guru*.⁸

But the concept had lost its original meaning at the time of Guru Nanak, so much so that the so-called *Gurus* had grown up like mushrooms, everywhere, and even in different localities of the same town. For most people, the *Gurus* personality of stature, did not matter. They were so hypnotised by the doctrine of Guruship that they felt satisfied if they found one, whether qualified or not, whom they should call as their *Guru*. It was really this blind and unintelligent faith that had led to Gurudom, flourishing at the expense of so many unsophisticated and gullible victims and exploited by clever and unscrupulous self seekers. But Guru Nanak was the most remarkable man of his time. He possessed an inquisitive mind, a rational outlook and an understanding nature and therefore emphasized faith in rational thinking and critical study. He could separate the true from the false, the good from the bad and, more difficult, the good from the attractive, with ease and naturalness, peculiar to him, adopting what was clearly sound, and revising or rejecting what was untrue and fallacious. Add to it the burning vehemence of his words that made even stalwarts low before him. Bhai Gurdas expresses this phenomenon, thus :

The *Guru* acquired spiritual victory over the heaven,
the nether world and the whole earth.⁹

The wide-awake man, as the *Guru* was could not but react sharply against the damage being done to the *Guru* concept and said :

They whose *Guru* is blind, what guidance can they have from him, without the true *Guru* they receive not the Name and without the Name, what use is life. ?¹⁰

Again :

Do not touch the feet of him who calls himself *pir* or *Guru* but goes abegging.¹¹

And *Guru Amar Dass* also in his own time, found a similar phenomenon going on and, in utter disgust, said :

They whose *Guru* is blind, act blindly. They follow the dictates of their own will and utter lies everyday.¹²

And *Guru Ram Dass* had like wise affirmed the fame, metaphorically thus :

How could a master, himself hungry and naked, feed well his servant ? What the master hath, that will go to the servant also. How could he give to others what he himself hath not ?¹³

The point made above is that one who himself has no spiritual awakening cannot feed the spiritual needs of one's adherents, which really is the objective before a *Guru* worth the name. This state of affairs had caused *Guru Nanak* to give a fresh look to the whole concept of Guruship and he had come to the conclusion that the term '*Guru*' had to be qualified by the adjective 'perfect' i.e. *pura* (flawless), or *sat* (true) or *dhan* (wonderful). For him, perfection was the true test for whom so ever one would associate the stature of Guruship, and by same test one would measure the extent to which God had descended through the person concerned. This would require the human *Guru* to be wrought in the image of God, who alone could be the truest *Guru* of mankind :

All humans have shortcomings, only the Creator-Lord is without error.¹⁴

And when asked by the *Yogis* of Gorakhmatta once as to who his *Guru* was, *Guru Nanak* had replied. Thus :

The Transcendental Lord, the Supreme Essence, is the *Guru* that *Nanak* had met.¹⁵

And it is a fact of History too that Guru Nanak did not have any earthly *Guru*. His Guru was God, from whom he had received awakening and light direct. If some *Yogis* of Gorakhmatta had also inquired from the *Guru*, was it possible for others also to reach such heights as he had done. The *Guru* had told them that as this God was present in every heart. He was the inner guide for all, though of course, it was not easy to reach Him. The basic thing, however, is that the human *Guru* can only be one who is the highest manifestation of the Lord in the human form. This view of Guru Nanak was so explicit to the succeeding *Gurus* that they also stated the same, quite categorically, in their own writings :

All else that we come across is subject to error. Only my true Guru, the Yogi (one merged in the Lord) is without error.¹⁶

Guru Arjan is referring to Guru Nanak, who was the guru guide of all his successors.

I salute the Lord, who was Guru in the Beginning and Guru before ages began, who appeared as Satguru and appeared as guru-dev.¹⁷

The line glorifies both the Lord and the human *Gurus*, as if both were identical terms. Again, as declared by the last *Guru* :

Know ye all that my *Guru* is He who is incarnated in all, from the beginning to the end.¹⁸

And he refers to God and His Message, thus :

Go thou to the World to spread Dharma everywhere.¹⁹

So, we can conclude that either God or his perfect manifestation in the human forms, can be the *Guru*, according to Sikhism. The implication is that God alone is the most perfect enlightener.

This brings us to the teachings of this *Guru*, or what is familiarly known as the *shabad* or the Word of this *Guru*, that comes through a human agency; the human *Guru*. The term *shabad* literally means the 'Word', written or spoken and was intended to represent God's Word, or God's Command, which was to be accepted as directing one to one's way of life or to one's Dharma of life. It indicated the direction in which one's entire life was to move :

Guru Nanak had this in mind, when he examined the truth of this claim for the Word, from the following lines.

The way of the *Yogis* is the way of knowledge and that of

Brahmins is the way of bravery and that of the *Sudras* is the way of service (of the higher castes). But to one who understandeth the matter truly, there is only one way for all and Nanak is the slave of such a one, whom he regardeth as the image of the Pure and the Divine Lord Himself.²⁰

Clearly the Guru did not accept this interpretation of the Word, the (the *Shabad*) as it was based on the penicious caste distinctions. He was clear in his mind that every man was potentially Divine because the Lord Himself dwelt in each of them. If he had forgotten his inherent and essential nature, because of his own *Karmas*, it could be rekindled :

Some men are brought near Him and the others are thrown away from Him, according to their own doings, their own *karmas*. They who dwell on the *Nam*, have their toils done. Nanak their faces are bright and, in their company, many are saved from the bondage of *Maya*, and the fruits of *karma*.²¹

The Guru means to say that the choice-making remains the distinguishing feature of man's life. On this account he can consciously build as also destroy. His experience would show to him that while ultimate human values like truth, love, goodness, compassion, humility, forgiveness etc. are all aspects of his essential nature, values like hate, fear, cowardice, violence, attachment, greed etc. are not natural to him—they are rather alien to his genuine or essential nature. They receive priority over the former only to the degree, he is alienated from his authentic self, may be on account of his own *karmas*. The Guru has indicated in the shaloka, above, the way or the direction leading to one's authentic self. Here is another quotation to that effect :

One in whose heart dwells the lord, lives truly, Nanak others do not live. If they live at all, it is dishonoured existence and all that they eateth for sustenance is a pollution, as it were.²²

The Guru is indicating the way of the Lord i.e. the way of God realisation, which may be defined as the process of developing and building one's authentic self. It is self-actualisation as against self-destruction. It is god realisation through the *Nam*, that enables the soul to rediscover itself i.e. to become Divine, as it potentially always is. So the conclusion is that really defective thing was the way of life,

indicated to the people by the 'Word' which they had mistakenly accepted as the right way of life. In other words, it means the guiding 'Word' itself has to be corrected and made whole before God-realisation is achieved and the peace of *Sahaj* is attained, as Guru Amar Dass had clearly demarcated it thus :

They who become detached within, their True Lord Himself maketh whole the (guiding) word of their lives.²³

This 'word' should become the 'word' with capital 'W' i.e. the Word of God, before it becomes flawless. In the last *pauri* (*pauri* 38) of *Jap(u) ji*. The Guru has indicated the True Mint itself that coins the Shabad in its unbremished form, thus :

If continence be the forge, patience the smith, Intellect the anvil, Divine Wisdom the hammer, God's Fear the bellows, disciplined life the fire, love the melting pot and in it if thou meltest the Nectar-name, then shalt thou coin the Word of the True Mint.²⁴

It is in this context that Guru Amar Dass had said :

Save for the True Guru's Word, every other word is false.²⁵

From the above collaboration, it has become clear that God, Guru Nanak and Guru Nanak's word are all identical terms, each affirming that it is God, the Truest Guru, that is speaking His own words, thus :

O Lalo, as the Divine Word cometh to me from my Lord (God), The same I relate to the people.²⁶

Again :

I say what the Lord commandeth me to say.²⁷

Again :

O glory be to the Word of the perfect *Guru*, it springforth from the Perfect *Guru* (God) and mergeth back into the True one (God).²⁸

Guru Ram Dass, as indicated at the start of the article, has given us the direction of his thinking, which he clarified further, thus :

O Sikhs of the Guru, accept, the Word of the True *Guru* as wholly true, for it is the Creator Himself who had put it in the *Guru's* mouth (Guru Nanak's mouth).²⁹

Again :

This word is uttered by Him who had created the whole World³⁰

And Guru Arjan goes further, thus :

The Guru's Word no one can efface (obliterate its spiritual power, its spiritual grandeur) for its Guru is Nanak and Nanak is God Himself.³¹

And what for did the Word come through Guru Nanak ? Bhai Gurdas speaks out poetically, thus :

When the Lord, the Benefactor, heard the cry of pain coming from the World, He sent Guru Nanak to show the way to the crying mankind.³²

The *Guru* according to Guru Nanak, is, thus a rare phenomenon, intended to fulfil God's High purposes. When religion loses its spiritual base and becomes mechanical, the world suffers in various ways, for want of guidance. It is then that a prophet is born i.e. the Lord speak through a human agency for giving the right direction to the life of mankind.

Here is the image of such a person :

If the Lord is in Mercy (Grace), then one meeteth the true *Guru*. The soul that had wandered through many births meeteth the *Guru* who imparteth it the Word. Hear Ye all, there is no one as beneficent as the true *Guru*, by meeting whom one attaineth to the True one and loseth one's ego (tiny self), the cause of every evil and subsequent misery. Through him the True One is Himself revealed.³³

And, What is the result ?

The true *Guru* turneth the impure into the pure and it is done through the Word, that maketh others beauteous in spirit.³⁴

In the above several quotations God, His Word and *Guru Nanak* through whom the Word had come, all three, are depicted as one, spiritually speaking. We should note here that when the other *Gurus* also speak of the Word, having come from God, they do not speak on their own but for *Guru Nanak* as they were all *Guru Nanak's* images and were only echoing *Guru Nanak's* basic thoughts.

In this connection, we have a very illuminating statement made by *Guru Gobind Singh* addressed to *Bhai Nand Lal*, thus :

It means to measure me, O *Nand Lal*, thou shouldst listen thoughtfully that I have three Forms-*Nirgun*, *Sargun* and *Gur Shabad*.³⁵

The Guru's though human in form had achieved the attributes of both the *Nirgun* and the *Sargun* (Lord). But how ? Meditations on the Lord can start on the *Sargun* aspect of the Lord i.e. on the personal God as only this kind of worship can engage the mind, then. In this way, the object of worship becomes the personality of the Lord, that possesses moral intellectual and spiritual qualities of the highest order. The fact of the matter is that the embodied human mind finds it rather impossible to fix attention on anything that cannot be visualised in any concrete terms. Thus, God as Person, is for the soul, a fundamental necessity. And the realisation of the *Nirgun* comes later when purity through awakening, is achieved and the soul comes face to face with itself i.e. rediscovers its true self, as it were. It is going to the state of *Sehaj* the state of self-discovery, when nothing can stand between the supreme self and the self of man. Now, as stated earlier, the Sikh gurus, speaking on the word of the Lord, do not necessarily speak on their own last echo Guru Nanak, for whom the 'Word' is a basic thought. And since Guru Nanak too had passed through both *Sargun* and the *Nirgun*, before realising Him, he had acquired the qualities or the attributes of both the *Sargun* and the *Nigurn* and then, when it pleased the Lord, he came to the world with the Word of Lord, to fulfil the High Purposes of the Lord. The Tenth Guru, on the *guddi* of Guru Nanak, has identified himself with the founder and has depicted the experiences of Guru Nanak, in glorification of the *Shabad* (Word), that was to be installed on the *guddi* after he had gone.

As the topic of the 'Word', installed as *Guru*, seems most extraordinary to the people at large, we give below how Guru Nanak had himself faced the same when the *Yogi* Gorakh Nath had asked him, as to who his *Guru* was, from whom he had achieved the realisation of the Lord ? The question and the Guru's reply are both with us, being actually given in the 43rd and 44th stanzas of *Sidh Gosht*, a composition of his own, thus :

What is the Origin (Beginning of life) and what view of life is to be accepted at the present time i.e. (What Word is indicating to thee as direction to thy life) ? (In other words) who is the Guru of whom Thou art the disciple ? What is the story of thy Lord whom thou hast accepted so as to keep thee beyond the bounds

of *Maya* and Ego ? Hear, O young man, to what we say, and reply to it. Please let us know thy thinking on it as also how the *Shabad* (Word) glorified by thee enables one to cross the sea of life.³⁶

The Guru's reply follows :

The beginning of life took place with the breath of life and the true Guru's spiritual Wisdom is the way to Him at the present time also. The Word is the *Guru* and the soul-well-attuned to it is the disciple. I have accepted the unutterable story of my Lord (through His word) that keepeth me beyond the bounds of ways and in my view the Lord of the Earth is the Truest *Guru* in all ages. Who ever meditateth on the one Word of this Lord, is regarded by me as Guru-Word and he destroyed the fire of Ego.³⁷

The statements of Guru Nanak given here are very significant in particular. It is categorically declared that Guru Nanak's *Guru* is the Word. Earlier, he had also stated at so many places that God was his *Guru*. There is no contradiction in these two ostensibly different statements, God as Guru mean by His Word being *Guru*. So far as the third of these i.e. the '*Guru*' in the human form, is concerned, it is also very important and rare phenomenon, in its own way, since a message for the world has come through human agency. As understood above it is not a cheap phenomenon in Sikhism, nor is this '*Guru*' even if he had come for the regeneration of mankind and in the fulfilment of God's High purposes, available at all times and to all people, because of human limitation. Guru Nanak was fully aware of these limitations and therefore from the very start, he had envisaged a new meaning that was to be given to the *Guru*-concept, He was quite conscious that a thing which was not available at all time, could not be treated on a permanency basis, as a principle, a doctrine and an absolute truth. The only thing permanent, then according to him, is God or His Word, which he reveals, when He Wills, through perfected human agency. The personal Guruship, therefore, becomes impermanent while Word can keep fertilising the minds of men for all time :

The Lord filleth the Guru with Himself, and thus,

through Him. His Word is made manifest.³⁸

The fact of the matter is that the Guru was preparing the Sikh people for what was ultimately coming, in its own time i.e. the formal installation of the 'Word' as their *Guru*, the abiding *Guru* for them, as conceived by him. It is with his eyes on the future that he, followed by his successors, had spoken of the Word being the Guru at countless places like this :

Without the Word of the Guru, no emancipation is possible, just ponder over it.³⁹

Again :

How can the sea of life be crossed, without the Word
And Guru Amar Dass speaks out this :

Sing ye the Word of the Guru, which is the most sublime of all Words. They on whom is the Grace of the Lord cherish it in their hearts.⁴⁰

Again :

The Guru's Word is a jewel, which is studded with diamonds. He whose mind the jewel fasteneth, mergeth in it.. The Lord Himself is the Jewel and Himself the Diamond.⁴¹

The same Word it was that was enshrined in the Holy Book by the 5th Guru and formally installed by the 10th Guru with the declaration :

Accept, O Sikhs of mine, the Holy *Granth*, as the Guru. It is Visible body (personification) of the (ten) *Gurus* and whoever aimeth at meeting the Lord may find Him, through the Word, embodied in it.⁴²

We should note the following points in the declaration :

- (i) *Guru Granth Sahib* is the visible personification of the tenth *Guru's* alone.
- (ii) And the Lord is to be realised through the Word, embodied in it, which can be the Word of the *Guru's* alone.

History bears out that even before the regular installation took place, the Gurus with their eyes on the future, did not see themselves on a footing of equality with the Holy Book, they gave a higher position to the Word than to their own persons. The human personality of each of them was detached from the spirit, which everytime was one,

indivisible and continuous, as indicated, by Guru Amar Dass thus :

There is one Word (the Word of the Lord that had come through Guru Nanak) and there is one *Guru* (Guru Nanak, the other *Gurus* being the images of Guru Nanak.)⁴³

Therefore, this is the speciality of the *Granth Sahib* that had bestowed on it the privilege to Guruship :

O Sikhs, of mine, ponder ye always on this one Word.⁴⁴

It is, of course, true that a personal guidance has also its own value but what else could be done against limitations which could not be helped ? Yet, the 10th Guru, while installing the Word as *Guru*, had made provisions for personal guidance, by merging the person of the *Guru* in the *Gursangat*, *Guru Panth*, declaring :

The *Khalsa* is in my own image and I reside in the *Khalsa*.⁴⁵

And Guru Nanak himself, too according to Bhai Gurdas, had eulogised the *Sangat* thus :

The spiritual power for emancipation of the seekers,
is in the Word and the holy congregation and in
nothing else.⁴⁶

The holy congregation signifies true seekers that had achieved spiritual power, through the *Nam*. The *Gurus* spirit was already embodied in the Word. Now the *Sangat* became the Body as it were, of the *Guru*. The loss of the person of the *Guru* which was the source of personal guidance found its compensation, to a great extent, in the combination of the term '*Guru*' with '*Granth*', '*Panth*' and the '*Sangat*'. The association of holy men (*Gursangat*) was sanctified and raised to the stature of the *Gurus* person. The Sikh *Sangats* were allowed to develop as a compact fellowship, around the personality of the *Gurus* to which, as stated above, the *Gurus* gave precedence over themselves. For 10 generations, each *guru* had contributed a new national trait, specified in his own life, Sikh character was thus built up in the hands of the 10 Masters, the aim being to produce a nation (community of god conscious men engaged in the service of the Lord and when history was built up and traditions and conventions had been created, the *Gurus* own personality and his Word, were formally separated. All this could be considered as a satisfactory arrangement to serve as a substitute for personal guidance, a thing that could not be maintained for all time. This is the final picture of the Sikh concept

of guruship.

But the question of questions remains : Where is the *Panth* today that was to represent the person of the *Guru*. Can any Sikh organisation claim that honour. The *Guru* had, in his own time, chosen the five best men whom he called his loved ones (*piaras*) and kneeled before them, as a disciple would, and had taken *Amrit* from them. But now, the community, as a whole, has lost its moorings and is groping in the dark. Its values have become topsy-turvy and with it, its moral spiritual and intellectual power has gone. In this predicament it is looking for crops, but catching at straws. Without going into these straws, we should think and find some way to come back to what the great *Guru* had envisaged. In this situation of the utter decay of our capacity to think, it is really difficult for any one to suggest a cure. Yet, we shall venture a suggestion. The community, as a whole, though divided into groups, trying to destroy each other, has still faith in the institution of *Akal Takhat Sahib* and no party dare disobey the direction indicated by it. In this context, our suggestion is that the *Jathedar* of this holy *Akal Takhat*, should be the topman in the community—a man of moral, spiritual and intellectual grandeur, totally free from alignments and untouched by controversy of any kind, enjoying, generally, the respect of the whole community. After every Gurdwara election, under the Gurdwara Act, the incumbent at the *Akal Takhat* would suggest to the SGPC the topman in the community for the *Akal Takhat Sahib* and then retire. It is hoped that the newly elected SGPC, as a whole, would accept his suggestion and, in course of time it may become an acceptable convention too. The details, of course, can be worked out, with changes here or there. It is clear, then, that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not all *Gurbani* in the sense that it is the Sikh Gurus, *Bani* (Word). It may perhaps be for this very reason that whereas the daily Sikh Congregational prayer speaks of God, the *Gurus*, the heroes, the martyrs, who suffered for great and holy causes, no mention at all is made to any of the saints that have figured in the analysis above. It may be that their compositions were added in *Guru Granth Sahib* for some other reasons. The compiler, like his predecessors, was basically a universal man, with a cosmopolitan outlook. He believed and preached that God was one and the World was one and therefore whatever one's religion; one's sympathies and

loyalties must be expanded so as to recognise that fact. For him, all Roads led to the same God and therefore all great Truths were the property of the whole human race and should not be restricted to a particular people. He agreed with Kabir who had stated :

Kabir is the child of God and, therefore all *Gurus*, *pirs*, the manifestations of the same God, are His.⁴⁷

Yet, this was just one aspect of the Sikh Guru's thinking. The other aspect which could be ignored was that Sikhism had to be given its distinctive character, if its absorption into other faiths was to be prevented. We can quote from the hymns, of each of the *Gurus*, and even from the *Vars* of Bhai Gurdas, that the maintenance of the doctrinal identity of Sikhism, was the basic thing for each of them and there could be no compromise over it. So, the above points of view, need to be examined very carefully, for the enlightenment of the Sikh people, particularly in view of the declaration, as indicated in the *Prachin Panth Parkash*.⁴⁸

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ਘੜੀਐ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ॥ (Ibid, p. 8.)
25. ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ (Ibid, p. 920.)
26. ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥ (Ibid, p. 722.)
27.ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਉ ਜੀਉ ॥ (Ibid, p. 763)
28. ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ
ਸਚਿ ਮਿਲਾਵਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ (Ibid, p. 514.)
29. ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਣਹੁ ॥
ਗੁਰਸਿਖਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਆਪ ਮੁਹਹੁ ਕਢਾਏ ॥ (Ibid, p. 308.)
30. ਏਹ ਅਖਰੁ ਤਿਨਿ ਆਖਿਆ ॥
ਜਿਨ ਜਗਤੁ ਸਭੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ (Ibid, p. 306.)
31. ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਮੋਟੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਹਰਿ ਸੋਇ ॥ (Ibid, p. 865.)
32. ਸੁਣੀ ਪੁਕਾਰ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਠਾਇਆ ॥ (Varan Bhai Gurdas)
33. ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਜੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਾ ਨਦਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਏਹੁ ਜੀਉ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਜਨਮ ਭਰੰਮਿਆ ਤਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਕੋ ਨਹੀ ਸਭਿ ਸੁਣਿਅਹੁ ਲੋਕ ਸਥਾਇਆ ॥

ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਮਿਲਿਐ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੀ ਵਿਚਹੁ ਆਪੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥

ਜਿਨਿ ਸਚੇ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥ (Ibid, p. 465.)

34. ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਖੋਟਿਅਹੁ ਖਰੇ ਕਰੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਵਾਰਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ (Ibid, p. 143.)

35. ਤੀਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਮੋਹ ਕੇ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਨੰਦ ਚਿਤ ਲਾਇ ॥

ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਕਹੋ ਤੋਹਿ ਸਮਝਾਇ ॥

(Rahatnama Bhai Nand Lal, stanza 6.)

36. ਕਵਣੁ ਮੂਲ ਕਵਣੁ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

ਕਵਣ ਕਥਾ ਲੇ ਰਹਹੁ ਨਿਰਾਲੇ ॥ ਬੋਲੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਬਾਲੇ ॥

ਏਸੁ ਕਥਾ ਕਾ ਦੇਇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਭਵਜਲੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

(Guru Granth Sahib, pp. 942-43.)

37. ਪਵਨ ਅਰੰਭੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਸੁਬਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

ਅਕਥ ਕਥਾ ਲੇ ਰਹਉ ਨਿਰਾਲਾ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ ॥

ਏਕੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਥਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ॥ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਅਗਨਿ ਨਿਵਾਰੀ ॥ (Ibid, p. 943)

38. ਗੁਰ ਮਹਿ ਆਪੁ ਸਮੋਇ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ ॥ (Ibid, p. 1279.)

39. ਬਿਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦ ਨ ਛੂਟੀਐ ਦੇਖਹੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਾ ॥ (Ibid, p. 229.)

40. ਆਵਹੁ ਸਿਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਹੋ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

ਬਾਣੀ ਤ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਕੇਰੀ ਬਾਣੀਆ ਸਿਰ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਤਿਨਾ ਸਮਾਣੀ ॥ (Ibid, p. 920.)

41. ਗੁਰ ਦਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਰਤੰਨੁ ਹੀਰੇ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੜਾਉ ॥

ਸਬਦੁ ਰਤੰਨੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਮੰਨੁ ਲਾਗਾ ਏਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਮਾਉ ॥..

ਆਪੇ ਹੀਰਾ ਰਤਨ ਆਪੇ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਦੇਇ ਬੁਝਾਇ ॥ (Ibid)

42. ਗੁਰੁ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਜੀ ਮਾਨਿਅਹੁ ਪਰਗਟ ਗੁਰਾਂ ਕੀ ਦੇਹ ॥

ਜੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕੋ ਮਿਲਬੇ ਚਾਹੈ ਖੋਜ ਸਬਦ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਹ ॥

43. ਇਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਇਕੁ ਗੁਰ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥ (Guru Granth Sahib, p. 646.)

44. Ibid.

45. ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੋਰੋ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ ॥ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਹਉ ਕਰਉ ਨਿਵਾਸ ॥

46. ਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਿਨਾ ਦੂਜੀ ਓਟ ਨਹੀ ਹੈ ਰਾਈ ॥ (Varan Bhai Gurdas, I, 42)

47. ਕਬੀਰੁ ਪ੍ਰੰਗਰਾ ਰਾਮ ਅਲਹ ਕਾ ਸਭਿ ਗੁਰ ਪੀਰ ਹਮਾਰੇ ॥ (Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1349.)

48. Ratan Singh Bhangu, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, ed. Bhai Vir Singh, Khalsa Samachar, Amritsar, 1982, p. 44

Guru Granth Sahib - A Juristic Person

Kashmir Singh

In a judgment entitled *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee Amritsar v. Som Nath Dass and others*¹ delivered on March 29, 2000, the Supreme Court of India has held that *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is a juristic person. Its impact was not properly understood and correctly appreciated in the beginning. It gave rise to some misconceptions, apprehensions and queries. The Sikhs felt alarmed and disturbed. Misinformation might have led to some sort of agitation. Various questions that cropped up about the judgment were as under :

- i. Does it hold *Guru Granth Sahib* simply a person?
- ii. Is it appropriate to call *Guru Granth Sahib* a person or a juristic person instead of Guru?
- iii. Whether the judgment denigrates Sikhism and *Guru Granth Sahib*?
- iv. Does it uphold the independent and separate identity of Sikhism?
- v. Has *Guru Granth Sahib* been equated with Hindu idol or deity?
- vi. Has it made the Holy Sikh scripture subject to the jurisdiction of worldly courts and facilitated to drag its name irreverently before the courts just like ordinary property holders?
- vii. Can the suits and claims be filed against every copy of *Guru Granth Sahib*?
- viii. Will it now become necessary to take *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* to courts?
- ix. Can the individuals destroying the copies of *Guru Granth Sahib* be convicted for murder?
- x. Whether the non-Sikh judges properly comprehended the Sikh principles and traditions?

Such queries have prompted to go through the judgment minutely and to dilate upon it. The judgment answers most of the queries but before discussing the judgment in detail, some of the

questions may be answered.

First we should know whether the ten Sikh Gurus were persons? If they were so, it will not be inappropriate to call *Guru Granth Sahib* a person or juristic person. The Sikh Gurus lived on this earth in flesh and blood like other human beings. They were human beings but they were ideal, perfect, holy and sinless human beings. Their humanity was real and not feigned. They fought tyranny, sin and evil and overcame it. They were perfect exemplars of mankind. They were not supernatural beings and were not beyond the capacity of the people to imitate them. They avoided showing miracles but taught by personal precept of love and labour. They lived as persons; therefore there is no harm if *Guru Granth Sahib* is also termed as such. Guru Gobind Singh did not relish to be addressed as Parmeshwar, Bhai Gurdas II called him '*Mard Agamra*' (ideal person). No aspersion can be imagined to the Guru by considering it a juristic person.

Every line of the judgment under discussion seems to eulogize Sikhism and its holy scripture and there is hardly any derogatory remark towards them. The judges have correctly comprehended and appreciated the Sikh principles and institutions. Justice A.P. Misra who authored the judgment felt so much enamoured by the Sikh institutions and traditions that he came to pay obeisance at Golden Temple within a couple of months of the pronouncement of the judgment.

The judgment does not equate *Guru Granth Sahib* with Hindu idol or deity. Rather the Supreme Court said when faith and belief of two religions are different; there is no question of equating one with another. The Court held categorically that *Guru Granth Sahib* couldn't be equated with an idol, as idol worship is contrary to the Sikh principles. Thus it clearly maintains and upholds the separate, unique and independent identity of Sikhism. It was held that no doubt the Sikh scripture is a sacred book but it can't be equated with the sacred books of other religions as the reverence of *Guru Granth Sahib* is based on different conceptual faith, belief and application. It is the living and eternal Guru of Sikhs.

It may be conceded that there is slight weight in the objection of taking the name of the Holy Scripture to the courts. But the Gurdwara also being a juristic person, the name of the Gurdwara is

more likely to be used in litigation. Instead of filing a suit against '*Guru Granth Sahib* situated at Gurdwara so and so', it will be more convenient to file suit for or against the Gurdwara itself. However, when some property is vested, mutated or registered in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib*, litigation in regard to that property will have to be in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib*. The sentiments cannot be allowed to come in the way of obtaining huge properties endowed by the devotees to the eternal Guru. The people who have encroached upon such properties are unnecessarily highlighting this objection for their selfish interests. It may be mentioned that name of *Guru Granth Sahib* was taken to the courts even before *Guru Granth Sahib* was declared as juristic person. The case of *Piara Singh v. Sri Guru Granth Sahib*² may be referred to in this regard.

The judgment does not at all prescribe to take *Guru Granth Sahib* to courts for the purpose of litigation. To hold it a juristic person means that it will be represented everywhere including before the courts by some natural persons such as managers, agents or advocates.

Punishment for murder cannot be awarded for bonfire etc. of *Guru Granth Sahib* because murder means killing of a human being by a human being. Besides, the Guru of the Sikhs, being immortal, can neither be killed nor does it die.

Elaboration of the doctrine of juristic personality, and its application to various religious institutions alongwith the exact details of the judgment will further clarify the matter. So it will be relevant to know the legal meaning of the terms 'person' and 'juristic person' and also about other institutions and objects upon whom juristic personality is conferred by law.

Person

Persons in ordinary sense are human beings but legal sense of persons is not identical with ordinary sense. So far as legal theory is concerned, a person is any being whom the law regards as capable of having rights and duties. Any being that is so capable is a person, whether a human being or not and no being that is not so capable is a person, inspite of being a human. In the eyes of law persons are the substances of which rights and duties are the attributes.³ Not only human beings but inanimate objects are also included within the

meaning of 'person'. So a person is any being- animate or inanimate, real or imaginary to whom law ascribes rights and duties. Personality is considered wider than humanity. All human beings do not necessarily possess personality in the eyes of law. The slaves were not regarded as persons in Roman law. Lunatics and minors enjoy restricted personality. Conversely entities other than human beings are treated as full legal persons.

Juristic Person

Persons are classified or distinguished as natural and legal (or juristic). A natural person is a being to whom the law attributes personality in accordance with reality and truth. Legal persons are beings, real or imaginary, to whom the law attributes personality⁴ by way of fiction when there is none in fact. Legal personality is an artificial creation of the law. According to the Supreme Court, "A legal person is any entity other than human being to which law attributes personality" Further, "the very words 'Juristic Person' connote recognition of an entity to be in law a person which otherwise it is not. In other words, it is not an individual natural person but an artificially created person which is to be recognized in law as such."⁵

Thus juristic or legal or artificial person is any subject matter to which the law attributes a fictitious personality. It is a legal creation either under a general law like Companies Act or by a specific enactment or by a decision of the court. Being the creation of law, legal persons can be of as many kinds as the law pleases. A legal person is holder of rights and duties, it can own and dispose of property, it can receive gifts and it can sue and be sued in its name in the courts.

When there is an endowment for charitable purpose, the question arises in whom does such property vest. Different legal systems have devised different devices for the purpose. The Muslim Law says such property vests in God, the Almighty, though they do not say that the God is a juristic person. The English Law creates trusts and vests legal ownership in trustee alongwith some additional rules for charitable trusts. Roman Law conferred juristic personality upon the foundation or institution to which property was dedicated for religious, pious or charitable purpose. Similarly, Hindu Law also personifies the endowment or foundation or institution to which property is dedicated

as the juristic person, capable of holding property like any other person. When a dedication is made to a religious or charitable purpose, no acceptance of such a gift is required.⁶ The renunciation of ownership by the settler in the dedicated property is sufficient to complete the gift but who becomes the new owner. Who gets or has will, power or capacity to own such property? The concept of ownership requires that the property have to vest in some person, natural or artificial. When an endowment for such purpose is created, the dedicated property vests in the purpose, institution or foundation itself.

Hindu Idols and *Maths*

The *maths* and idols have been recognized to be juristic persons in Hindu Law. On dedication, it is not the dedicated property which is personified but it is the deity, the idol, the principal part of the endowment which is personified as a legal person.⁷ The Privy Council consistently held this view. In its words:

A Hindu Idol is, according to long established authority founded upon the religious custom of Hindus, and recognition thereof by the courts of law, a juristic entity. It has a judicial status with power of suing and being sued. Its interests are attended to by the person who has the deity in his charge and who is in law its manager.⁸

The dedicated property belongs to the idol as a juristic person. The possession and management of that property and the right to sue in respect of it are vested in the shebait or manager. The suits in the name of an idol or deity are allowed.⁹ When a suit was instituted by the managing trustee on behalf of an idol, it was held to be properly instituted. The Nagpur High Court also held that suit did not abate on the death of managing trustee pending the action, since the real party to the suit was the idol which has a perpetual existence.¹⁰

The spiritual and legal aspects of Hindu idol need be distinguished. From the spiritual point of view idol is the very embodiment of the Supreme Being, but with this aspect of the matter law is not concerned, in fact it is beyond the reach of law. In law, neither God nor any supernatural being can be a person. But so far as the deity or idol stands as the representative and symbol of the

particular purpose indicated by donor, it can figure as a legal person.

Math

Math, like an idol, is also a juristic person. It is capable of acquiring and holding property and vindicating legal rights, although it always does so through a human agency, i.e., mahant.¹¹

Besides these under Hindu Law when endowment is made for an institution with a religious, pious or charitable purpose, the institution itself will be treated as a juristic person. Amongst the Buddhists, the *Sangha* is considered a juristic person, capable of holding property.

Mosque

Whether mosque is a juristic person? The Lahore High Court¹² had held that a mosque is a juristic person. This was again the question before the Full Bench of the Court in *Mosque known as Masjid Shahid Ganj v. Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar*¹³ to which reference in detail will be of interest.

The Masjid alongwith courtyard of about four *kanals* was existing in Lahore since 1722. It became the place of martyrs (Shahid Ganj) after the Muslim rulers executed Bhai Taru Singh and many other Sikhs including women and children there. On occupation of Lahore in 1762, the Sikhs took over the possession of mosque and the attached land. A Gurdwara was built adjacent to the mosque. The Muslims were not allowed access to the place since then. After the British annexation, criminal case and two civil suits by the Muslims failed in 1850 and 1855 respectively. The Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 declared the mosque building and adjacent land as part of Sikh Gurdwara, 'Shahid Ganj Bhai Taru Singh'. The Gurdwara Mahants and Muslims filed various claims before the Sikh Gurdwaras Tribunal for having the rights therein. Their claims failed before the Tribunal, which held that Mahants hold possession on behalf of the Gurdwara and the case of Muslims failed due to adverse possession and previous decisions. Following this the Sikhs demolished the mosque building in July 1935. Riots and disorder followed, the Muslims expressing great resentment.

The present suit was filed in October 1935 in the Court of District Judge Lahore against the SGPC. It contained no claim for

possession of property or ejectment of the defendants. The relief claimed was a declaration that building was a mosque in which all followers of Islam had a right to worship, an injunction restraining any improper use of building and mandatory injunction to reconstruct the building. The District Judge dismissed the suit. An appeal to the High Court was also dismissed by Young C.J. and Bhide, J.; Din Mohammed J. dissenting.

This suit was filed in the name of mosque and some others. It was motivated by the notion that if the mosque could be made out to be a 'juristic person', this would assist to establish that a mosque remains a mosque forever, that limitation (adverse possession) cannot be applied to it. The Privy Council,¹⁴ dismissing the appeal, did not accept the mosque as a juristic person. The contention that 'a Hindu idol is a juristic person and on the same principle a mosque as an institution should be considered as a juristic person' was rejected. It was held that there is no analogy between the position in law of a building dedicated as a place of prayer for Muslims and the individual deities of the Hindu religion.

It is submitted that the Privy Council had correctly dismissed the appeal on the basis of very sound reasons such as adverse possession, (Art. 144, Limitation Act), earlier decisions (S.11 CPC) and provision in the Sikh Gurdwara Act debarring all courts to pass any order inconsistent with that of the Sikh Gurdwaras Tribunal. But the mosque could very well be declared a juristic person without accepting its claim of non-application of law of limitation. The Lahore High Court had recognized mosque as a juristic person in three earlier decisions, which the Privy Council brushed aside by saying that the decisions are confined to Punjab alone though there was no contrary authority from any other High Court. Besides, the mosque could be held a juristic person on the analogy of Hindu religious deities. Rajasthan¹⁵ and Madras¹⁶ High Courts have followed Privy Council in holding that mosque is not a juristic person.

Gurdwara a Juristic Person

Gurdwara as a institution, independent of its building and property, is recognized as a juristic person. The Punjab and Haryana High Court in Mahant Lachman Dass case held, "The word "Gurdwara" in section 5(1) stands for the abstract institution which

owns the entire property of a particular Gurdwara including the place of worship itself.... The word could not have been intended to refer to tangible, physical property, i.e., the actual place of worship, visible to the eye, composed of bricks and mortar, but to something which owns that place of worship"¹⁷. Thus it was concluded that the Gurdwara is a juristic person. The High Court has again conclusively laid down that a Gurdwara is a juristic person which can own property and can bring a suit in its own name to protect the property owned by it through its manager¹⁸. In *Piara Singh v. Shri Guru Granth Sahib*¹⁹ also the High Court observed, "the appellant's objection to the locus standi of *Sri Gurdwara Sahib Madnipur* to sue is untenable as it is now well settled that a Gurdwara is a juristic person".

The Supreme Court has also confirmed that the Gurdwara is a juristic person while allowing the appeal in *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee v. Som Nath Dass*.²⁰ In that case the majority in the High Court had held that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not a juristic person because there cannot be two "Juristic Persons in the same building viz; 'Gurdwara' and '*Guru Granth Sahib*'. The Supreme Court termed it as a misconceived notion and held that they are not two separate juristic persons but are one integrated whole. And even if they are different, the Court held by referring to *Ram Jankijee Deities v. State of Bihar*,²¹ that existence of two separate juristic persons in the same precincts, as a matter of law, is valid. Thus, while clearly holding '*Guru Granth Sahib*' to be juristic person, the Supreme Court also approved the 'Gurdwara' to be so.

Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC)

The SGPC is a focal point of Sikh Gurdwara Administration. Section 42 (3) of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act declares that the SGPC shall be a body corporate having perpetual succession and a common seal and shall by such name sue and be sued. Similarly section 94-A of the Sikh Gurdwara Act provides that every Committee of Management of different Gurdwaras will also be a body corporate, having perpetual succession and common seal and shall sue and be sued in its corporate name.

The Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1971 contains a similar provision in Section 3(2) concerning the Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Management

Committee (DSGMC). Section 3 (2) of J&K Sikh Gurdwaras & Religious Endowment Act, 1973 declares the State Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Board as incorporated body in exactly similar terms. Section 5 of the Nanded Sikh Gurdwara Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib Act, 1956 reads as under:

The Board shall by name of Nanded Sikh Gurdwara Sachkhand Sri Hazur Abchal Nagar Sahib (NSGSSHAS) Board be a body corporate and shall have perpetual succession and a common seal with power to acquire and hold property and to transfer such property subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be prescribed and shall by the said name sue and be sued.

Thus SGPC, Committees of Management of Gurdwaras, DSGMC, State Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Board (J&K) and NSGSSHAS Board are constituted to be juristic persons by the respective enactments. The Punjab, Delhi and J&K legislations state that these shall be body corporate having perpetual succession and common seal and shall sue and be sued in their corporate names. The Nanded Act further mentions the power of NSGSSHAS Board to acquire, hold and transfer the property. All these Gurdwara bodies are conferred juristic personality by the respective statutes. A legal person in its very nature is perpetual.

Guru Granth Sahib- a Juristic Person

It is only four years back that *Guru Granth Sahib* has been held to be a juristic person by the Supreme Court of India in SGPC v. SN Dass.²² Earlier the Punjab and Haryana High Court in Piara Singh v. Shri *Guru Granth Sahib*²³ had not permitted this question to be raised before the High Court for the first time on the technical ground that this question was not raised before the lower courts. But in S.N. Dass the High Court was lenient enough to allow this question to be raised before it for the first time.

In SN Dass's case the facts were like this. The proprietors of the village Bilaspur in the (then) State of Patiala had gifted 115 *bighas* of land in charity (*punnarth*). The ancestors of the respondents were given the management of this land for the purpose of providing food and comforts to the travellers passing through the village. But they

failed to perform their duty and in an attempt to usurp the property, got the land entered in their personal names in the revenue records in the last settlement. Royal Order dated April 18, 1921 ordained, *inter alia* :

No property or *muafi* shall be entered in the name of Mahant in the revenue papers without special approval of the Government. Land pertaining to the Dera should not be considered as property of the Mahant. These should be entered as belonging to the Dera under the management of the Mahant. The Mahant shall not be entitled to sell or mortgage the land of the Dera.

Some villagers questioned the above-mentioned mutations in the revenue records. The Revenue Officer, after inquiry, sanctioned the mutations in the name of "*Guru Granth Sahib barajman Dharamshala deh*" by deleting the names of the ancestors of the respondents from the column of ownership of the land in 1926 and 1928. Since then these entries continued in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib* and no one objected to these entries. However the respondents and their ancestors had remained in possession of the property

When the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 became applicable in PEPSU area in 1959, some Sikhs filed a petition for a declaration that the disputed property belonged not to the respondents but to the Sikh Gurdwara namely 'Gurdwara Sahib Dharamshala *Guru Granth Sahib*' situated at village Bilaspur, Tehsil Sirhind, District Patiala. The respondents disputed the claim but the Sikh Gurdwaras Tribunal decided in 1978 that *Guru Granth Sahib* is the owner of the property consisting of Gurdwara building and the agricultural land. In appeal before the High Court, the respondents argued that the entry in the revenue records in the name of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is void because it is not a juristic person. 'No person, no property' rule was pleaded. On the other hand, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee argued that *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is a juristic person and hence it can hold property and can also sue and be sued. Division Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court was divided on this point, Justice Kulwant Singh Tiwana holding *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* a juristic person and Justice M.M. Punchhi refusing it to be so. The third judge, Justice Tewatia, who was appointed to resolve the tie, agreed with

Justice Punchhi's view holding that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not a juristic person. After decision about juristic personality by majority, the matter was again before the two judges for final disposal. They differed again. Justice Tiwana held the mutations to be valid and the respondents having no right to the property and Justice Punchhi held the mutation to be invalid and the property belonged to the respondents. To resolve the tie again, the matter was put before Justice J.B. Gupta who concurred with Justice Punchhi. They based their decision on the earlier majority opinion that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not a juristic person and, therefore, mutation in its name was not sustainable. Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee came in appeal to the Supreme Court which correctly appreciated "the question raised in this appeal is of far reaching consequences and is of great significance to one of the major religions' followers in this country".

The appellants argued that entry in the revenue records in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib* was valid because it is a juristic person but the respondents emphasized that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not a juristic person and therefore not capable of holding property. So the Supreme Court was to decide whether *Guru Granth Sahib* is a juristic person or not.

Before referring to the arguments of the parties, the Court examined the Sikh history and principles to hold *Guru Granth Sahib* a juristic person. It noted, "Sikhism grew because of the vibrating divinity of Guru Nanakji and the succeeding Gurus, and the wealth of all their teachings is contained in '*Guru Granth Sahib*'. The last of the living Gurus was Guru Gobind Singh ji who recorded the sanctity of '*Guru Granth Sahib*' and gave it the recognition of a living Guru. Thereafter it remained not only a sacred book but is reckoned as a living Guru."²⁴

There is a direct ruling of this court on the crucial point. In *Pritam Dass Mahant v. SGPC*²⁵ this Court held that central body of worship in a Gurdwara is *Guru Granth Sahib*, the holy book is a juristic entity. It was held that the sine qua non for an institution being a Sikh Gurdwara is that there should be established *Guru Granth Sahib* and worship of the same by the congregation and Nishan Sahib. There may be other rooms of the institution meant for other purposes but the crucial test is the existence of *Guru Granth Sahib* and the

worship thereof by the congregation and Nishan Sahib.²⁶

Referring to the Sikh Gurus, the Supreme Court quoted one of its earlier judgments²⁷ wherein it was aptly observed:

They were ten in number each remaining faithful to the teachings of Guru Nanak,
the first Guru and when their line was ended by a conscious decision of Guru

Gobind Singh, the last Guru, succession was invested in a collection of teachings

which was given the title of *Guru Granth Sahib* This is now the Guru of the

Sikhs... Now this *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is a living Guru of the Sikhs. Guru

means the guide. *Guru Granth Sahib* gives light and shows path to the suffering humanity.

Then the Court quoted the following verse which is believed to be an utterance of Guru Gobind Singh and is recited in all the Gurdwaras daily-

All my Sikhs are ordained to believe the Granth as their preceptor.

Have faith in the holy Granth as your Master and Consider it the visible manifestation of Gurus.

He who hath a pure heart will seek guidance from its holy words.

To pronounce *Guru Granth Sahib* a juristic person, the Supreme Court observed:

The last living Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, expressed in no uncertain terms that henceforth there would not be any living Guru. The *Guru Granth Sahib* would be the vibrating Guru. He declared "henceforth it would be your Guru from which you will get all your guidance and answer." It is with this faith that it is worshipped like a living guru. It is with this faith and conviction, when it is installed in any Gurdwara, it becomes a sacred place of worship. Sacredness of Gurdwara is only because of placement of *Guru Granth Sahib* in it. In this background and on overall considerations, we have no hesitation to hold that GGS is a juristic person... *Guru Granth Sahib* has all the qualities to be recognized as such.

The installation of *Guru Granth Sahib* is the nucleus or nectar of any Gurdwara. If there is no *Guru Granth Sahib* in a Gurdwara, it cannot be termed as Gurdwara. When one refers a building to be a Gurdwara, he refers it so only because *Guru Granth Sahib* is installed therein. Even if one holds a Gurdwara to be juristic person, it is because it holds the '*Guru Granth Sahib*.'

The Granth replaces the Guru after the tenth Guru.

We unhesitatingly hold *Guru Granth Sahib* to be a juristic person.

Respondents' arguments and their rebuttal by the Court: The Supreme Court, allowing the appeal, brushed aside the various arguments of the respondents and held that the High Court committed a serious mistake of law in holding that *Guru Granth Sahib* is not a juristic person. The arguments of the respondents and the Court's reasons for rejection thereof were as follows :

(a) An Idol is recognized to be a juristic person. *Guru Granth Sahib*, a sacred book, can neither be equated with an idol nor does Sikhism believe in idol worship. Further, conferring legal personality on *Guru Granth Sahib* will amount to idolatry practice. It will be contradictory to Sikh principles, which do not believe in idolatry. Hence *Guru Granth Sahib* cannot be a juristic person

The Supreme Court said, "This submission in our view is based on misconception. It is not necessary for *Guru Granth Sahib* to be declared as a juristic person that it should be equated with an idol. When belief and faith of two religions are different, there is no question of equating one with the other. If *Guru Granth Sahib* by itself could stand the test of its being declared as such, it can be declared to be so." It held that *Guru Granth Sahib* has all the qualities to be recognized as Juristic person. Holding otherwise would mean giving too restrictive a meaning to a 'juristic person', and that would erase the very jurisprudence which gave birth to it.

(b) Respondents' second argument was that *Guru Granth Sahib* is a sacred book like Bible, Geeta and Quran. None of these including *Guru Granth Sahib* is a juristic person.

According to the Court, this submission of the respondents also has no merit. Though it is true that *Guru Granth Sahib* is a sacred book like others but it cannot be equated with those other sacred

books in that sense. *Guru Granth Sahib* is revered in Gurdwara like a Guru which projects a different perception. It is the very heart and spirit of Gurdwara. The reverence of *Guru Granth Sahib* on the one hand and other sacred books on the other hand is based on different conceptual faith, belief and application. (para 34)

(c) Next argument was that there could not be two juristic persons in one place viz; Gurdwara and *Guru Granth Sahib*. Gurdwara is already held to be a juristic person, so legal personality cannot be conferred on *Guru Granth Sahib*.

The Supreme Court called this argument as a misconceived notion as there is no difficulty of having two juristic persons at one place. It was held that *Guru Granth Sahib* and Gurdwaras are no two juristic persons at all. In fact both are interwoven and they cannot be separated. They are one integrated whole. *Ram Jankijee Deities v. State of Bihar AIR 1999 SC 2131* was referred to hold that as a matter of law there is nothing wrong in the existence of two separate juristic persons in the same precincts.

It is submitted that there are more than two juristic persons around at the same time. Besides *Guru Granth Sahib* and Gurdwara, a third juristic person, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee or the Committee of Management concerned will also be there.

(d) Another argument was, if *Guru Granth Sahib* is held to be a juristic person, every copy of it will have to be considered as such.

The argument that if *Guru Granth Sahib* is a "Juristic Person" then every copy of it will be so, in the considered opinion of the Supreme Court, is based on an erroneous approach. On this reasoning it could be argued that every idol even at private places would become a "Juristic Person". This is a misconception. An 'idol' becomes a juristic person only when it is consecrated and installed at a public place for public at large. Every 'idol' is not a juristic person. So every copy of *Guru Granth Sahib* cannot be a juristic person unless it takes juristic role through its installation in a Gurdwara or at such other recognised place.

(e) Lastly it was argued that there can be no juristic person without a manager. As no manager was appointed in the contentious endowment, so *Guru Granth Sahib* in that case cannot be a juristic person.

The highest court held that no endowment or juristic person depends on the appointment of a manager. It may be proper or advisable to appoint such a manager while making any endowment but in its absence, it may be done either by trustees or courts in accordance with law. Mere absence of a manager does not negative the existence of a juristic person.... Once endowment is made, it is final and irrevocable. It is onerous duty of the persons entrusted with such endowment, to carry out the objectives of this entrustment. They may appoint a manager in the absence of any indication in the trust or get it appointed through court. So if entrustment is to any juristic person, mere absence of a manager would not negate the existence of a juristic person.

The majority in the High Court had accepted all these arguments of the respondents. The Supreme Court, while allowing the appeal, observed that the High Court committed a serious mistake of law in holding that *Guru Granth Sahib* was not a juristic person and in allowing the claim over this property in favour of the respondents. The hon'ble judges of the Supreme Court said, "In this background and on over all considerations we have no hesitation to hold that GGS is a juristic person... We unhesitatingly hold *Guru Granth Sahib* to be a "Juristic Person".

On merits also the Supreme Court found "that the mutation in the revenue papers in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib* was made as far back as in the year 1928, in the presence of the ancestors of the respondents and no objection was raised by anybody till the filing of the present objection after a long gap of about forty years. Further this property was given in trust to the ancestors of the respondents for a specified purpose but they did not perform their obligation. It is also settled, once an endowment, it never reverts even to the donor. Then no part of these rights could be claimed or usurped by the respondents' ancestors who in fact were trustees. Even on merits any claim to the disputed land by the respondents has no merit"

This is an appreciable and well-reasoned pronouncement from the apex court of India. It will help to remove the encroachments from the properties worth crores of rupees belonging to the Sikh religious institutions which are endowed in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Conclusion: This is a landmark and historic judgment of far-

reaching consequences and great significance. Huge properties worth crores of rupees exist in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib* in various parts of the country. These were encroached upon by usurpers as *Guru Granth Sahib*, not being a juristic person, could not be deemed to hold property in the eyes of law. It also could not sue to recover the property for the same reason. This judgment has plugged the loophole. Now *Guru Granth Sahib* is a juristic person that can hold and dispose of property and can sue for recovery of property belonging to *Guru Granth Sahib* in the wrongful possession of unscrupulous people who were taking the undue benefit the legal lacunae.

There should not be any delay or inhibition in filing suits on behalf and in the name of *Guru Granth Sahib*, if necessary, for recovery of the Guru's property. The property so recovered and income therefrom should be used for the noble causes to alleviate the suffering of the mankind. It can be said that the judgment is quite satisfactory and encouraging. It acknowledges the special position and status of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. No adverse impact is likely to be caused to the tenets of Sikh religion by the declaration of *Guru Granth Sahib* as a juristic person. Our Ten Gurus were persons made of flesh and blood. They preached and taught the humanity by personal conduct. They never called themselves as Super Human Beings. So there is nothing wrong if the Supreme Court has also accepted *Guru Granth Sahib*, the reigning Guru of the Sikhs, as person in which the spirit of Ten Gurus lies. Besides, the Supreme Court of India has highlighted various Sikh principles in a right perspective.

Referemces

1. AIR 2000 SC 1421.
2. AIR 1973 P&H 470
3. Salmond on Jurisprudence, Sweet & Maxwell , London, (1966) 299.
4. Som Parkash Rekhi v. Union of India AIR 1981 SC 212.
5. SGPC v. Som Nath Dass AIR 2000 SC 1421, para 11.
6. Paras Diwan, Hindu Law (2nd ed.), 438.
7. Krishna Singh v. Mathur Ahir AIR 1972 All 273.

8. Pramath Nath Mullick v. Pradyunna Nath Mullick (1925) 52 Indian Appeals 245, 264.
9. Jogindranath v. Hemanta Kumari (1905) 31 IA 203.
10. Gajanand Madaraj Sansthan v. Rama Rao Kasinath AIR 1954 Nag 212.
11. Babajirao v. Laxmandass ILR Bom 215; Krishna Singh v. Mathura Ahir AIR 1972 All 273.
12. Maula Bux v. Hafizuddin AIR 1926 Lah. 372; Jindu Ram v. Hussain Baksh AIR 1914 Lah. 444; Shankar Dass v. Said Ahmad (1884).
13. AIR 1938 Lah. 369
14. Masjid Shahid Ganj v. Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee AIR 1940 PC 116.
15. Mohd. Safindeen v. Chatur Bhaj 1958 Raj Law Weekly 461.
16. Sunnath Jamath Mosque Committee v. Land Adm. Commissioner (1998) 1 Law Weekly (Mad.) 69.
17. Mahant Lachman Dass chela Mahant Ishar Dass v. State of Punjab ■LR 1968 (2) P&H 499, 541.
18. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Khoja Majra v. Nagar Panchayat Khoja Majra (1969) 71 PLR 844.
19. AIR 1973 P&H 470.
20. 2000 (2) RCR (Civil) 609, 618.
- 21.. 1999 (5) SCC 50.
22. SGPC Amritsar v. S.N. Dass AIR 2000 SC 1421.
23. AIR 1973 P&H 470.
24. AIR 2000 SC 1421, para 1.
25. AIR 1984, SC 858: (1984) 2 SCC 600.
26. AIR 2000 SC 1421. para 21.
27. Pritam Dass v. Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee AIR 1964 SC 858, 860.

The Concept of Divine Marriage in the *Guru Granth*

Raj Kumar Arora

The language of the inner religion, mysticism or higher form of religion has always been symbolic. The mind cannot reach 'there' and the tongue is unable to express its mystery. It has been rightly remarked that 'they who know, do not speak' and 'they who speak, do not know', It is, therefore, through symbols that the men of God try to provide some glimpses of the Beyond.

Type of Relationship of the Individual with God

Generally speaking, the Bhakti Cult adopted four types of relationship towards the Lord. These are master-servant, friend-friend, parent-child and husband-wife relationships. Service equality, affection and complete identity, are the respective hall marks of these four types. It has been rightly remarked by an old *sūtra* that, "the devotee first serves the Lord as a servant. Then he approaches Him nearer, and loves Him as a friend. Then he rises higher and manifests parental affection for the loved one, as a father for his son. And ultimately all vestiges of remoteness between them vanish altogether. The two become one in spirit and the devotee develops all the marks of a devoted wife's love for her beloved husband. The devotee consecrates his whole being to the beloved Lord, loses himself in Him and feels His living presence everywhere;".¹ In the three attitudes i.e. *dasya*, *sakha*, and *vatsalya*, the highest attainment to which a mystic aspires i.e., complete identification and oneness with the Lord appears to be not possible because there remains some idea of selfhood or ego in the mind of the devotee. But in the *madhurya bhava* this ego is completely eliminated and the person becomes one with himself and one with the Reality. "The union, the desire to lose one's individually, is the highest state of a mystic."² Since love or God occupies the most prominent position in the Sikh religion as the sovereign means to attain God, and

this being the only bond between the wife and her husband, the Sikh Gurus consciously bring into bold relief this *madhurya bhava* in their teachings. The *Guru Granth* explains very vividly and beautifully the marriage of soul with God, and fully utilises the wealth of detail available in marriage ceremonies between two partners.

The Devotee as Wife

In the *Guru Granth* it is emphatically enjoined upon the aspirant that "all are His brides."³ Further it is said, "there is only one Groom, i.e. God and all creation is His bride."⁴ This idea is explained with a wealth of detail in these words :

"Like a married couple enjoy the bed of the spouse."⁵ "The Sun has risen in full splendor, I have spread the bed in full faith for my Lord. My ever new Love comes to enjoy me."⁶ "...O, my father, give me in marriage to my Lord. I long for Him. I belong to Him. The Lord of the three ages enjoys His bride."⁷ "The father has given me in marriage in a far off land (*Maya*). Now I do not go back to my father's home."⁸

The above mentioned idea of God as the lover and the individual, both man and woman, as the beloved and their union contained in the Sikh scripture finds its echoes in various cults, creeds and schools of Indian philosophy. But it must be clearly emphasized here that the vocabulary and the sense of this idea used by them differs in many respects from the form and essence of the Sikh faith. In the Hindu and the Buddhist Tantras, as well as in the Nath cult, the idea of union has been considerably highlighted, but their concepts and methods vary to a great extent. The Hindu and Buddhist Tantras, and the Naths use the terms *shiva shakti*, *pragya* and *upaya* and *ida pingla* respectively in their *sadhana* to attain supreme bliss by the merger of these two entities. The Sahajiyas following the path of the love and devotion, propagated the union of male and female in the form of Krishna and Radha. They used several episodes from the life of Krishna as depicted in the *Bhagvat Purana* and other allied texts to illustrate their point. But we must bear in the mind that in these cults the male and the female are considered the counterparts of these two yogic concepts as mentioned above. "Both the schools (Hindu and Buddhist Tantras) hold that the ultimate non-dual reality possesses two aspects in its

fundamental nature-negative (*nivritti*) and the positive (*pravritti*) the static and the dyanmic and these two aspects of reality are represented in Hinduism by *Shiva Shakti* and in Buddhism by *pragya* and *upaya* (or *snuyata* and *karuna*). It has again been held in the Hindu Tantras that the metaphysical principles of Shiva and Shakti are manifested in this material world in the form of *pragya* and *upaya* are objectified in the female and the male.⁹ It is further explained, "the world appearance as a result of dependent origination is the grand bridegroom; had he not been there and bride *sunyata* would have been dead as it were. But, on the other hand, had this beautiful bride of *sunyata* been separated for any time from the bridegroom, he would remain eternally under bondage. So the relation between *sunyata* and *karuna* is like the relation of inseparable conjugal love, the love between them is the most natural love and so it is inseparable."¹⁰ In the Sahajiya cult the idea has been stated in these words, "*Sahaj* as the absolute reality of the nature of pure love involves within it two factor i.e., the enjoyer and the enjoyed represented in the Nitya Vrindhavan by Krishna and Radha. These principles of the enjoyer and the enjoyed are known in the Sahajiya school as the *Purush* and *Prakriti* manifested on earth is the male and the female."¹¹

From the above it can be safely concluded that the Sikh religion discards the vocabulary and the terms used by the Naths, the Sahajiya and the Tantras. The Hindu and the Buddhist Tantras as well as the Naths consider the male principle as the static one and the female principle as the dynamic one. But in the Sikh religion we do not come across any such statement showing the static and dynamic aspects of Reality. In the Sahajiya school the wife and husband are represented as the counterparts of Radha and Krishna, which show their strong inclination towards Vaishnavism. The *Guru Granth* rejects this interpretation and considers every person as wife of the Lord. In this connection the Sikh view resembles much with the views expressed by various medieval Bhagats. "Jnaneswara speaks of God as the Lover and devotee as the beloved. This, however, he tells us under the influence of the erotic mysticism which finds the relation between husband and wife to be near analogous to the relation of God and devotee."¹² "I shall marry the only Lord."¹³ "All of us are the wives of the same One Lord. And for Him we decorate ourselves."¹⁴ In

Christian mysticism the idea has been expressed in these words : "Nor are there found any expressions equally sweet to signify the mutual affection between the word of God and the soul, as those of Bridegroom and of bride; in as much as between individuals who stand in such relations to each other all things are common, and they possess nothing separate or divided. They have on inheritance, on dwelling place one table and they are, in fact, one flesh. If, then mutual love is specially benefitting to a bride and bridegrooms, it is not unfitting that the name of Bride is given to a soul which loves."¹⁵

Thus, it appears that the Sikh Gurus reject outright certain practices and ideas associated with this concept as we find in the case of Tantras and the Naths. They have discarded the yogic *sadhana* of these cults and creeds and recommended the path of passionate love as *upaya* and of Shiva and Shakti, the static and dynamic aspects, respectively, leading to the state of *maha sukh* or *sahaj* find similar echos also in the Sikh scriptures where the union of wife i.e., the soul with the husband i.e., the Lord, leads to utter bliss. In the Sikh faith we find that the Lord is aslo quite active with regard to the passionate entreaties of the soul. He feels the pangs of passionate separation of His beloved, listens to her and also comes to the rescue. There is warm embrace with the soul and He ravishes her.

It can be said with considerable emphasis that the concept of divine marriage available in the *Guru Granth* accords well with the general frame work of the Bhakti Movement. However, the Sikh Gurus describe the mystical marriage, right from the betrothal ceremony to its consummation, with all its customary ceremonies.

Ornaments of the Bride

Before marriage the bride has to be decorated with ornament and she wears specially made clothes. Unguents, perfumes, powders etc. are applied on the body. Similar is the case with divine marriage. The inner spiritual marriage reuquires no earthly ornaments at all, but the bride must look attractive to engage the attention of his spouse. It is here that we find stress being laid on the cultivation of moral virtues in the *Guru Granth*, "The devotees who speak sweetly and are humble, enjoy the bed of the Lord."¹⁶ Constant remembrance of the Lord is another ornament of the bride. "A woman whose jewel is pure mind,

and she with every breath remembers the Lord, becomes entitled to Lord's love."¹⁷ Submission to the will of the Lord is another virtue. "Obeying the will of the Lord is the chief ornament of a devotee."¹⁸ Self-surrender is yet another attraction. "A true bride must surrender her body and mind to the Lord."¹⁹ We all know that the Sikh Masters have repeatedly emphasized the necessity of *nam* and *sabad*. These become the choicest ornaments for every bride. The Lord hastens towards the devotee who possesses these jewels. "When she loves *nam*, she becomes a true bride."²⁰ "Who decks herself with *nam* and the fear of the Lord, reaches the abode of the Lord and always lives there."²¹ "She, whose ornament is the *sabd*, remains in the state of *sahaj* with her Lord."

Pangs of Separation

The disturbed state of mind of the bride whose husband is away is very realistically depicted. "The wife when separated from the husband passes sleepless nights in pain. Her body withers away and she longs intensely for the Lord. She is becoming dry. But if the Lord wills, she can yet meet Him."²³ When after repeated requests and treacherous wait He does not favour her, she cries in pain : "My prayer is in wildness, how shall I be comforted without Thee. The night is long and extremely painful. I cannot live without Thee, there is none to take care of me. I wail alone."²⁴ Death is about to approach her, "My bed is alone. I am in great distress. Death is here."²⁵ The Lord listens to these prayers and decides to come there. But His arrival is short-lived. He comes like a guest. "When the bride longs for the Spouse, full of worship and love, He comes like a guest to meet His beloved."²⁶ In the medieval devotional literature of the Hindus and the Sufis, references of this nature are found in abundance. Kabir's longing is very intense. "I am burning in the fire of love, and, therefore in great, distress. I do not go under the shade of the tree, so that it may also not burn down in that fire."²⁷ "When will that day come, when I shall embrace Him warmly, for whom I have got this body."²⁸ "The last stage of the pangs of separation is death. Kabir's body is now reduced to a mere skeleton because it is devoid of blood and flesh."²⁹ "The condition of Dadu in such a state causes great anxiety and misery. Seeing His Path, his hair have turned turned grey."³⁰ The Indian Sufi

literature also contains many such references : "The blade of the sword is very sharp, but the agony of separation from the Lord is extremely frighening."³¹ "He who has this pain in his heart, becomes immortal. He can never die."³² The mystic does not rest till his goal is achieved. P.N. Srinivasachari puts it beautifully in these words : "When the longing becomes intense hunger for the Absolute, it is an infinite longing for the infinite."³³

The Marriage Party

We come across quite vivid description of the marriage party of this divine marriage in the Sikh scripture. The Lord comes with His entourage to take the bride to His place. "I marry the Eternal Being, who neither dies nor is born. The marriage party consists of holy servants of the Lord. In the company of the *sants* the marriage was performed."³⁴ "Accompanied by the Lord's servants, the marriage party looks beautiful."³⁵ "The seers, the sages and thirty three crore gods come in the heavenly chariots to see the grand spectacle."³⁶ "The Lord has arranged my marriage. He has come to wed me. The wedding party consists of the angelic beings. It is wonderful."³⁷

In the Indian marriage many relatives and friends of the bride also come to take part in the marriage. The *Guru Granth* makes references to this also. "By His grace, the Lord has come to my house. My friends have assembled to celebrate my marriage. My mind is in ecstasy to se this play."³⁸ Here is a very peculiar references in this connection : "Let me make my body the dye-stuff and then dye may mind. The five elements i.e. earth, water, fire, wind and ether are my friends and relatives. I must go round the fire and be imbued with the love of the Lord. O ! my mates, sing the wedding song, because the Lord lias come in my home."³⁹ The reference to these five elements, of which this human frame is made up of, means complete self-surrender of the devotee to the Lord. "The bride sings the song of joy. In my home comes the Lord. My mind and body are filled with Him. The five *tattvas* are the marriage party. Rama has come to wed me. I am full of youth. My body is the *vedi*, and Brahma reads the Vedas, I am going round the *vedi* and marrying Rama. I am very fortunate, Thirty-three crore gods and eighty-eight thousand Munis have come to witness the scene. I have wed the only Lord.

The Marriage Ceremony

Now the Lord reaches the bride's house to wed her along with the marriage party. Here again we come across the selection of the auspicious time. "The Lord comes to my house on the auspicious day. This day has been selected by a priest after consulting his books. I was overwhelmed with joy."⁴¹ The marriage can be solemnized only by the guru. "Through the guru, I was wedded."⁴² "I was wedded to the Lord through the guru's *sabd* and my mind has accepted the truth."⁴³ The references to the custom of circumambulation is also there. An eloquent and detailed reference of this custom is available in the *Guru Granth*. There is a mention of 'four rounds'. "In the first round the Lord sent me back to the world to perform household duties and look upon the *sabd* of the guru as the gospel of the Vedas, practise goodness and discard sin and dwell on the *nam* of the Lord. This led to the cleaning of the mind's impurities and gathering of bliss. The Lord appeared to be happy with me. In the second round the Lord united me with the true guru. I became fear-free except the fear of the Lord. Ego was also erased. I saw the vision of the all-prevailing Lord and heard the divine music (*anhad sabd*). In the third round there was joy and detachment. The tie with the parents (world) was cut asunder and the Knot with the in-laws (Lord) was strengthened. I saw the Lord and uttered His *nam*. In this round there was divine attachment. In the fourth round the mind is held in *sahaj*. I attained the Lord. He met me spontaneously by the grace of the guru. I am now in love with the Lord. I have got my heart's desire. The glory of *nam* rings in my mind. The Lord has brought about this wedding. I am in bliss and illumined by *nam*."⁴⁴

These four rounds suggest that there are different stages of the journey to the Absolute. In the first round, the individual performs all the worldly duties and prepares himself for the love of the Lord. The Lord is pleased with his efforts and unites him with the guru in the second round. In the third round relations with parents are completely erased and the soul goes to the house of the in-laws to live there. In the fourth round the soul enjoys the fruits of marriage. The Christian mystic, Richard of St. Victor also divided the 'steep stair way of love', by which the contemplative ascends to union with the Absolute, into four stages. These he calls the betrothal, the marriage, the wedlock and the fruitfulness of the soul.⁴⁵

Giving of dowry by the father to the daughter was an established custom. The Sikh Gurus also use this symbol. It is said, "O father ! give me the Lord's *nam* as dowry."⁴⁶

Married Life

After the performance of ceremonies, the marriage is consummated. The bride is now full of bliss and her every pore is full of nectar. "When I mount His *sej* (bed). I find all the seven seas (five sense organs, mind and intellect) brimfull with nectar."⁴⁷ "When she meets her Spouse, the Lord, she is blessed with immense bliss."⁴⁸ "All honour, greatness and joy belongs to her. She is now possession of all miracles, perfections and the nine treasures. She lacks nothing. Her speech is sweet, she is pleasing to the Lord, and her wedded state is eternal."⁴⁹ "She abides in her house. There is divine music. She is very fortunate."⁵⁰ "The marriage is performed with pomp and show. The five sounds ring within me."⁵¹ "I am never widowed. I am always the bride of the Lord, and remain in *sahaj*."⁵² "When loved by the Lord she bathes in *sahaj* at the confluence of truth."⁵³ "When I meet the Lord, the wedding song is sung. I merge in *sahaj*. I cry not again."⁵⁴ Thus we find that the wedded life represents the state of *sahaj*, perfect peace, the attainment of all powers and of listening to the *anhad sabd*. The devotee becomes a part of the Great Silence. As P.N. Srinivasachari says, "Spiritual marriage is consummated in the intermost recesses of the interior castle. The enraptured soul neither sees, nor hears nor understands owing to the thrills and touches of divine union."⁵⁵

Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be safely concluded that the concept of divine marriage is found in mysticism wherever it has been preached. The Christian, Sufi and Indian mystics have conveyed their inner experience of the unitive life through the agency of the marriage symbol. They have rightly found that human marriage affords an adequate symbol for describing the spiritual communion of the mystic with the infinite.

In the *Guru Granth* this mystical communion has been described in the detail with the help of poetic genius of the Gurus. Many Indian rituals and ceremonies have been utilised by them to trace the journey of the bride to the abode of her Bridegroom. She decorates herself

devotion for the Lord. The long wait makes her desperate and her whole being begins to ache with the pangs of separation. Ultimately, the Lord is pleased by her sincerity and comes with His marriage party. He is well received and goes back with the bride of His Abode. There is complete joy and happiness in the married life. Thus the *Guru Granth* describes this marriage in worldly terms. But, in spite of its earthly garb this marriage is purely non-worldly. As Ram Kumar Verma puts it, "In mystic marriage there is no smell of worldliness or sex but is wholly flavoured with spiritualism."⁵⁶ "Through the husband-wife relation symbol the dry thoughts of philosophy and spiritualism are brought back to life and lustre. By using this symbol these ideas are described in soft and sweet language."⁵⁷

In the married life, the bride becomes the co-sharer and co-partner of all that belongs to the Lord. Everything they hold is in common. The effort of the true wife is not to get the wealth, miraculous power and other presents from the Husband, but to seek union with Him. As is rightly said, "The Guru mystic experiences are not the gifts of God, but God Himself."⁵⁸

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Concept of Social Responsibility in *Guru Granth*

G.S. Dhillon

Before the advent of Guru Nanak, Indian society was in a state of chaos and defeatism. The value of other worldliness was a prominent part of the Hindu ethic¹. One of the debilitating influences of Muslim power in India was that the Hindu society hardened a great deal in its internal structure and turned more and more fatalistic and pessimistic in its approach to the larger world. The Hindus managed to survive by withdrawing into the web of exclusiveness provided by caste and kinship.² Caste became a kind of protective shell, a mechanism of isolation and withdrawal from an unkind environment. The quietistic Hindus pursued the even tenor of their way, self-satisfied and almost indifferent about others. They were too weak to confront the challenge of activist Islam. Hinduism, a contemplative religion, had no real sociological import.³

It was Guru Nanak who laid down the path of universal love and the emancipation of man without distinction of caste and creed and gave a new hope to the tottering humanity. Closely integrated with religion was the Guru's programme of social regeneration through reorientation of the prevailing social outlook. He led a new pattern of religious response to the social, moral and political problems of man. He expressed his disenchantment with the contemporary social order and denounced the politico-administrative set up of his times in very strong words.⁴ The Guru felt sorry to note that the rulers behaved like butchers, ruling by dint of sheer physical force.⁵ He chided and deprecated the Hindu elite by saying that the Khatri had forsaken their vocation of wielding their sword for the sake of their *Dharma*, the Brahmins, instead of enlightening the people were leading them astray with meaningless rites and rituals. The *Yogis* of spiritual worth had hidden themselves in the safety of high mountains and saints had taken the path of asceticism and instead of doing something useful

for society had become parasites.⁶ The Guru saw that people were suffering and religion detached from social responsibility was of no avail enlightening their burdens. He was repelled at the manner in which religion was being perverted, resulting in despair and frustration in society.⁷ The concept of social responsibility was the natural and inevitable corollary of the path of love and true service of man, of the rejection of asceticism and monasticism, the acceptance of the householder's life and responsibility⁸ and of securing justice, equality and freedom of all men preached by Nanak. All the Gurus held on to the socio-spiritual legacy of Guru Nanak. They amplified his ideas with shifts of emphasis but without deviations from or disregard to his key-concepts.

Socio-religious view contained in the *Gurbani* in the hymns of the Sikh Gurus, are the product of inner illumination-revelation-and not of formal logic or reasoning. As Guru Nanak himself puts it : "I relate as the divine word comes to me."⁹ Guru Ram Das says, "O Guru's Sikhs, know that the true Guru's hymn is most true, the Creator Himself hath caused him to utter it."¹⁰ *Gurbani* covers a comprehensive range of themes including God, His nature and attributes and His relations with man and universe. It has an inalienable social content and points towards the ethical order and a value system deeply rooted in the social context. Manner of Guru's compositions is simple and lucid, often related to man's daily experience.

Concept of social responsibility is fundamental to the message of *Guru Granth* and holds the key to the importance of Sikhism as a dynamic religion. Socio-spiritual welfare of humanity is one of the major concerns of Sikhism. A clear perception of the social philosophy of the Sikh Guru is very essential as it has a far reaching effect and consequence in shaping and directing the life of the Sikhs and in understanding the significance, origin and course of Sikh character, institutions, ethos and tradition. It helps in following the ideological and practical implications of Sikhism. *Gurbani* has a real sociological import¹¹ and many of the distinguishing features of Sikhism are deeply and directly connected with it.

The concept of social responsibility is something more than a codification of duties and functions. It involves an understanding of the integrated vision of the Sikh Gurus, their world-view and a value

system meant for a corporate society. It is in this context that salient features and implications of the concept have to be seen and studied.

Sikhism differs from other religions in some of its basic postulates. The Hindus and the Buddhist creeds look upon this world as *Maya* (illusion) or suffering.¹² They believe that the highest end of life is to secure release from the worldly snares and that this release can be secured through self-culture, the silencing of desires (*trishna*) in one's ownself rather than flowing out of oneself to share one's bliss with others. However, the Sikh Gurus held that though this world is subject to constant change, still it is a reality. The earth becomes sanctified, being 'the Abode of True One.'¹³ "He Himself is real and what He has created is also real. His actions are real and so is His creation. From the root of reality, reality springs. Real is the universe and real are their parts. Thy '*Lokas*' are real and their form is real. What ever is done by Thee is real. All Thy reflections are real."¹⁴ Hence there is no question of our being in a dreamland of unreality. Life is real. This reality is not final and abiding but a reality on account of God's presence in it. The whole creation has a purpose behind it but that purpose is revealed to man only when he is in tune with His Will or purpose. Human life is considered to be an opportunity to cultivate inherent spirituality which must result in righteous deeds in the social context. The world is compared to a garden of flowers where life is ever in bloom!¹⁵ and it is man's duty "to pull out all the weeds of evil, no matter where they had appeared, in one's consciousness or out of oneself, in one clime or another, in this race or that and of whatever hue they are-social, moral, intellectual or political. A man thus becomes a conscious gardner to tend the nursery of God, a wrestler to fight the "five" within and as many without."¹⁶ Man's ultimate object is not to seek a release from life but to strive for a moral and spiritual living. Socio-political phenomenon is looked upon as a vital manifest reality. Guru Nanak calls this world *Dharmsal* (a place of righteous action).¹⁷

The Gurus revolutionised the concept of 'Mukti' and social service. Their ideal of complete emancipation of man involved not only gaining a higher consciousness for an individual but also his total freedom from the fear of death, fear of insecurity, fear of oppression and injustice and fear of want. "He who meditates on the fearless One,

loses all his fear."¹⁸ Infact, major afflictions of man are rooted in these fears, leading to all kinds of social and political conflicts and problems. In the social field the Gurus aimed at this fourfold total freedom. This has formed the basis of the socio-political ideology of the Sikhs. It has become an article of firm conviction with the Sikhs that *Mukti* is not release from the world but liberation from its fears, For them *Mukti* is to seek martyrdom in the battles fought for upholding a righteous and noble cause. Blessed are those who die in the service of Lord; such heroes will be honoured in God's court' says Guru Nanak in praise of those who sacrifice their lives for the 'game of love.'¹⁹ The forty Sikhs, both at Chamkaur and at Khidrana, who died fighting to the last man are remembered as *Muktas (liberated ones)* to this day. In the daily Sikh prayer an eloquent reference is made to their sacrifices.²⁰

The Sikh view of life also includes a belief in the unity of spirit. The Guru says, "I simply know that the whole creation is strung in the thread of His order."²¹ The great idea of the brotherhood of man flows out of this belief. It is the keynote of the teachings of the Gurus and also forms the basis of the social relationship of the Sikhs with the rest of mankind. It has been stated, "Let no one be proud of his caste...The whole creation germinated out of one Brahma, out of the same clay the whole creation is moulded."²² In the perception of the Sikh Gurus religion should not generate a revulsion from the world. Guru Nanak says, "One gets not to God by despising the world."²³ Religion is for the world and there is no unworldliness in it. At the same time the world is also for religion. Therefore, spirituality and phenomenal existence are inseparable. They stand together. Spirituality is interwoven with the cosmos. In his spiritual activities the Sikh is like the dynamo which generates electricity and in his worldly life the motor which expends it. Worldly orientation of the religious life of the Sikhs or the ideal of *Jivanmukti* can be seen in its manifold expressions and has had a profound effect on the Sikh tradition. Sikhism developed a distinctive identity has a strong, coherent and comprehensive way of life, covering every aspect of human existence. Social dynamism of Sikhism has to be viewed and construed in this light. Sikhism is one indivisible whole and no aspect of life is separated from any other. The integrated vision of the Sikh Gurus must

be understood and appreciated in its true perspective. Any lopsided study is bound to falsify its true character. Unfortunately, many superficial observer of Sikhism, especially in the west, have not given due weight to the world-view of the Sikh Gurus.

Sikhism recognises the inviolable right of the individual to the possession of his whole self. Life is to be lived wholly, in its fullness and not in compartments or segments. If religion is for man, it has to embrace the whole man and cannot ignore his material needs.²⁴ Guru Nanak says, "The God-oriented lives truthfully while a householder."²⁵ He believes that asceticism or renunciation of the world is unnecessary, 'the pious permit and the devout householder being equal in the eyes of the Almighty.'²⁶ The Gurus themselves got married and lived as householders. So much so that Guru Nanak barred his elder son Sri Chand from succession to him because of his affiliation with 'Udasis' (a sect of mourners over the sad state of man in an evil world). The third Guru Amar Das was keen that there would be more of '*anand*' (joy) than of '*Udasi*' (sorrow) in the movement started by Guru Nanak. Of the most notable compositions of Guru Amar Das, the third Guru, are the forty stanza '*Anand or song of joy*', commonly used at wedding festivals. The second and the third Gurus, while they welcomed everyone in the Sikh society, took special care to exclude the ascetics from the Sikh fold. Guru Amar Das emphatically declared that, "the active and domestic Sikhs were wholly separate from the passive and recluse Udasis."²⁷

Guru Nanak's recognition of the reality of the visible world has a logical link with the concept of God, which too has a distinct sociological meaning and import. The Guru believes that God is both Immanent in His Creation and beyond it.²⁸ This gives authenticity to life and universe which is decried or downgraded in many other religious and mystic traditions. God's concern with the social and ethical lends support to Guru's imperative that one ought not to shun or escape from the duty of ethical actions. Life-affirming faith of the Guru is committed to three assertions regarding the nature of God; (i) He is '*Karta Purkh*' who creates, sustains and directs the universe with the loving care; (ii) He is Om-nipotent;²⁹ (iii) He is wholly good and benevolent.³⁰ Therefore, the existence of evil is incompatible with

the world having been created by a benevolent and omnipotent God. The Guru says, "My God is riches to the poor, staff to the blind and milk to the child."³¹ This attributive aspect of God gives all assurance of divine help for direction and aid in man's march towards his goal. It not only gives validity and spiritual sanctity to moral and ethical life in this world but also provides optimism, hope and confidence to man in his earthly sojourn.

The Guru's religious experience about God is that 'He is all love, and the rest He is Ineffable'³² The other religious systems in India view the Ultimate Reality as 'Sat-Chit-Anand', which is a quietistic concept, which intimately links God to the world, love being the fountain of all virtues and values expressible in this world. Love is a force more potent, more creative and more resplendent than any other force yet discovered. The socio-religious ideology of the Guru is based upon this creative resplendent force which provides the necessary basis for peace and harmony in the religious, social and political spheres. It seeks an active programme for the adjustment of all discordant conditions, for the improvement of total order and for the operation of the Universal Law of Love. It requires devotion, determination, dynamism and courage of the highest order. It is in this context that Guru Nanak says, "If thou art zealous of playing the game of love, then come upon my path with thy head on thy palm. Yea once thou settest thy foot on this way. Thou find not a way out, and be prepared to lay down thy head."³³

According to the Guru, life is not sinful in its origin but having emanated from a pure source remains pure in its essence in life. 'O mind, thou has emanated from the Light of the Lord; know thy essence.'³⁴ says the Guru. If impurities or imperfections gather around one's life on account of ignorance, these can be washed away and one sparkles forth as pure as one was in one's origin. 'O my body when the Lord putteth His light in thee, then thou comest into life'.³⁵ says the Guru. Man ought to honour himself and deem himself worthy of the highest,³⁶ the greatest value of man being self-comprehension of his essential nature, the dignity of spirit. God creates man not for suffering but for the realisation of his true purpose in the cosmos and to unite in from where he issued forth.³⁷ Consequently Sikhism

assumes no Evil Force, Devil or Satan as in some other religions. The major emphasis in the Guru's teachings is on moral deeds.³⁸ which elevate man to a high level of freedom, peace and harmony and lead him to godliness. The Guru possessed that the 'way of truth' was even superior to devotion. He laid great stress on excellence of conduct. 'Truth is higher but higher still is truthful living.'³⁹ The hymn of *Dharam Khand* lays down man's duties in life and states that man will be judged by his deeds,⁴⁰ though the final 'approval' will depend on God's grace.⁴¹

The highest ideal for a Sikh is no longer an extinction of one's personality nor an endless bliss in the high heavens. It is the submission of one's ego to the God's cosmic order (or Will or Hukam) in order not that one may retire from the world's activity but serve and share in a never-ending state of equipoise (*Sehj*).⁴² In *Yogic Samadhi* or Buddhist Nirvana the corresponding state is the state of passive equilibrium which implies an integrated and harmonized involvement in social relations. This is how Sikhism comes forward with its unique reconciliation of the spiritual and the empirical or the transcendent and the immanent.⁴³ As an instrument of God's Will it is incumbent for a Sikh to accept total participation in life and total social responsibility which prevents the bifurcation of life into different spheres. *Hukam* is a regulative principle of moral order.⁴⁴ The will of a realised self is in tune with Hukam.⁴⁵

The Guru attributes manifold qualities to a God centred person (*Gurnukh*)-the greatest of them being that he, due to his constant communion with God, attains a higher sense of perception, a universal consciousness that he is an integral part or a vital link in the world of God and not an isolated being. He takes an active part in the social life of the community as a responsible member and productive agent. Virtues of love, peace and harmony illuminate his mind and enable him to develop all his latent faculties and cultivate a positive, creative and optimistic attitude to life (*Chardi Kala*). His awareness of the underlying unity of humanity and its intimate link with divinity unfold to him new vistas of selfless love and foster all those virtues that enrich life and make it meaningful.⁴⁶ It helps him to widen the orbit of human relationships and thus cast out all pettiness, selfishness and baser

elements. Thus he is fully armed and equipped to embark on the path of service of mankind and the supreme goal of welfare of all. In order to highlight the merits of a *Gurmukh* the Guru contrasts him with a *Manmukh*, a self-centred person, who lives in the conditions of shallow wealth and worldly goods through wrong means. This attitude, according to the Guru, is a perversion of religion and leads to morbid reactions in society. In the Guru's conception spiritual salvation is linked with social salvation. Infact, service of one's fellow beings is indispensable for man's moral and spiritual growth.⁴⁷

In most religions the foremost aim of life is the salvation of an individual soul rather than a corporate society. This being the highest virtue, it is valued above all social bonds and duties. In trying to reach that state, one's *dharma* consists of a faithful pursuit of the duties endowed to one's role and position in life. Main emphasis being on personal salvation, it makes for a peculiar kind of individualism, non-attachment and comparatively low set of expectations from society and government and a kind of cynicism with regard to use and abuse of power. However, the Sikh religion is concerned with something more than individual salvation. A Sikh is enjoined to take an active interest in whatever concerns the material, moral and spiritual welfare of his fellow beings—a corporate society in which the fortunes of everyone is linked up with those of others. He is supposed to live his social and political life in accordance with his *Dharma*, fully conscious of his responsibilities in all fields. His motto is *Sarbat da bhalla* (welfare of all). Sikh Gurus were not bigoted. They saw religion as a manifestation of beauty and harmony and as a means of universal love and service of mankind. They believed that the search for Truth must go beyond a pedantic approach which exhausts itself on ceremonial piety and barren verbiage.⁴⁸ It must begin in humility, innocence, open-mindedness, creative optimism and an active service to God and man.⁴⁹ The Sikhs were to live their religion and not merely to profess it. "Religion consisteth not in mere words; he who looks upon all men as equal is religious."⁵⁰ says the Guru. Since Guru Nanak believed in the eternal sovereignty of God, he felt that, first and foremost, one owed moral allegiance to God which was over and above political allegiance to a corrupt state. A ruler must look after

the welfare of his people and follow the path of truth and righteousness.⁵¹ A state which cannot provide basic human rights, social justice, equality and freedom of religion needs to be denounced and opposed. And this was no idle percept. The Sikh tradition is very eloquent on the subject. The revolutionary ideal took firm root in the Sikh society and made its members more fit to play the part that was in store for them in the future. G.C. Narang rightly points out that the steel of the sword used by Guru Gobind Singh was welded by Guru Nanak.⁵²

Guru Nanak's view of society emanates from the same integrated vision that constitutes his view of God, universe, man and humanity. Guru envisages a healthy and harmonious society based on the principles of mutual help, cooperation, tolerance, goodwill, sharing and collective well-being. The Guru throws open the doors of organised religious life to all without any distinction of high or low, superior or inferior, and women and men alike. His three fold message to his followers (i) *Kirat Karo* (work hard), (ii) *Vand Chhako* (share the fruit of your labour with others) and (iii) *Nam Japo* (meditate on God's name) is of great sociological significance.⁵³ It reveals his dynamic approach towards religion, his deep humanism, his regard for the dignity of labour and his concern for the fellow beings.⁵⁴

Guru Nanak gave concrete shape to the ideas of human equality and fraternity through the institutions of *Shabad*, *Guru*, *Sangat*, *Pangat*, *Dharmshal* and *Langar*. Rich and poor, high and low, men and women all were made to sit together, pray together and dine together. All these institutions developed in close relation to the concept of social responsibility.

According to Guru Nanak, *Nam Simran* is not mere contemplation or alienation from social life. Spiritual development of man in cooperation with others culminates in a harmonious social order. The ideal of collective well-being or collective liberation can be realised through *Sangat*.⁵⁵ In the compositions of the Sikh Gurus *Sangat* as congregation comes out vibrantly alive.⁵⁶ To be in the *Sangat* was a sign of God's grace. The institution of *Dharmshal* (earlier nomenclature of the modern Gurdwara) was also established by Guru Nanak where *Sangat* could meet frequently or as often as possible not only to pray

together but also to understand what was the righteous path according to the Guru's system. These *Dharmshals* not only served as repositories of Sikh religion but also aimed at the socio-spiritual welfare of the community.

According to the Sikh Gurus, life is a spiritual venture and the world has to be kingdom of God. A Sikh is supposed to live his life in pursuit of this venture—a venture which gives him both an earthy purpose and a spiritual hope. Guru's concerns were integrated, universal and without any boundaries. The Sikh scripture enjoins that a God-oriented person owes primary allegiance to God, conscience, truth, justice and morality. This makes incumbent on him to play his role towards the creation of a positive corporate culture, of a just socio-political order, which would eventually put an end to all tensions and turmoil.

As the concept of social responsibility took firm hold of the Sikh community, it had far reaching social, cultural and political manifestations. The community reached the highest levels of manhood. The Sikhs became more manly and their womanhood became socially liberated. The faith of the Gurus bestowed upon them a social-political vitality to live life more vigorously and abundantly as good householders and responsible citizens. It made them more catholic in dress, diet and habit and filled them with a spirit of enterprise to explore the whole world for adventure as for livelihood. The word Singh given to Khalsa was synonymous with the martial spirit, courage, nobility and an extrovert character. They have left on the Indian history a distinctive stamp of their creativity. This species of whole men is the finest cultural product of the religiously and socially integrated Sikh faith.

It is due to the social dynamism of its people that Punjab became a highly productive and prosperous region and came to acquire a place of pride in the country. It has led the other states in the agricultural revolution and earned the unique distinction of being food bowl of the country. With its glorious heritage of chivalry and martyrdom the Sikh community has played a leading role not only in stemming the tide of the invaders but also in the country's struggle for independence a role which has been out of all proportions to their

small numerical strength. Though currently living in the midst of an immense historical crisis, the community continues to have an indomitable will to face all odds and an unswerving faith in its future.

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ਸਿਸ੍ਰੁਟਿ ਸਭ ਇਕ ਵਰਨ ਹੋਈ ਧਰਮ ਕੀ ਰਾਤਿ ਰਹੀ ॥ (*Ibid.*, p. 663.)
ਸਿਧ ਛਪਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਪਰਬਤੀ ਕਉਟੁ ਜਗਤਿ ਕਉ ਪਾਰਿ ਉਤਾਰਾ ॥
ਜੋਗੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੁਣਿਆ ਨਿਸਦਿਨਿ ਅੰਗਿ ਲਗਾਇਨਿ ਛਾਰਾ ॥ (Bhai Gurdas, Var I, *Pauri* 29.)
7. ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥
ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥ (*Guru Granth*, p. 26.)
8. "Be Udas" (detached) in thy mind in the midst of householdership". (Amar Das, *Guru Granth*, Asa Ragni)
"Householders and hermits are equal, whoever calls on the name of the Lord". (Guru Nanak, *Guru Granth*, Asa Ragni)
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21. *Guru Granth*, p. 284.
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24. ਭੂਖੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨਾ ਕੀਜੈ॥ (*Ibid.*; p. 656.)
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27. ਅਵਿਗਤੋ ਨਿਰਮਾਇਲੁ ਉਪਜੈ।
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28. *Ibid.*; p. 1.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*, p. 679.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 459.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 1243.
34. ਮਨ ਤੂ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਆਪਣੁ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ॥ (*Ibid.*, p. 441.)
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38. ਜਿਨੀ ਸਚੁ ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ਸਚੁ ਰਾਜੇ ਸੋਈ॥ (*Ibid.*, 1088.)
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45. ਹੁਕਮਿ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ॥ (*Ibid.*)
46. ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਤ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਹਕਾਮੈ॥ (*Ibid.*, p. 286.)
47. ਵਿਣੁ ਗੁਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਇ॥ (*Ibid.*, 4.)
ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੋਇ॥ (*Ibid.*, p. 1245.)
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ਅੰਤਰਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਣਨੀ ਘਟਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਲੁਕਾਣਾ॥ (*Ibid.*, p. 419.)
49. ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ॥
ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ॥ (*Ibid.*, p. 26.)

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ਜਿਨੀ ਸਚੁ ਪਛਾਣਿਆ ਸਚੁ ਰਾਜੇ ਸੋਈ ॥ (Guru Granth, p. 1088.)
ਤਖਤਿ ਬਹੈ ਤਖਤੈ ਕੀ ਲਾਇਕ ॥
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ਮਿਲਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥ (Guru Granth, p. 492.)

***Guru Granth Sahib* and The Sikh Institutions**

Kharak Singh

An institution is created to fulfil a purpose. If that purpose is forgotten, it becomes a ritual, and its practice is mere institutionalism devoid of the purpose institutionalized. For a proper appreciation of the Sikh institutions it is necessary, therefore, to recall the essence of the message of the founder Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The Guru's mystic experience revealed a Sole Loving God who created the universe and who *inter alia* takes pleasure in looking after all human beings as a father does his children. This implies a universal brotherhood of equals living in love and harmony without discrimination based on caste, creed, colour, gender, social status or geographical region. We are all equal inheritors of His blessings. No individuals, groups or communities, racial, cultural or ethnic, have claim to special privilege by virtue of birth. Equality and justice are the hallmarks of the Guru's system. To inculcate these and other virtues that elevate 'man to angel' and to promote a positive view of life instead of the prevailing negative approach which regarded this world as unreal and placed a high value on other-worldliness, asceticism, and monasticism, it was necessary to establish some institutions. Some of these values had been preached by radical *Bhagats* before Guru Nanak. But their efforts left very little visible impact on society for want of appropriate institutions. This underlines the importance of the required institutions in the adoption of desired values.

What is an Institution

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines an institution as 'a significant practice, relationship or organisation in a society or culture (-of marriage)'. It also includes 'something or someone firmly associated with a place or a thing'. According to the Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary it is 'that which is instituted or established; precept or principle; foundation; established order; a

system of principles or rules, etc. These definitions could yield a long list of institutions in the body of the Sikh thought and practice. Examples are 'household', '*Anand marriage*', '*Amrit Sarbat Khalsa*', '*Gurmata*', etc. However, for the present study we have restricted the discussion to some basic and primary institutions of Sikh religion, namely, *Guru, Sangat, Pangat/ Langar, Dharamsal, Bani/ Shabad*, and *Daan* which are rooted in the message of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Guru

The word Guru literally means one who removes darkness. He is an enlightener and a teacher. The institution had existed in India long before Guru Nanak. There are references in *Upnishads* to *guru* instructing his disciples. In the Sikh religion, the *guru* is no ordinary teacher. It has a meaning far more profound. Guru Arjun Dev defined a true guru (*Satguru*) as:

"He is *true guru* who has realised the Supreme Being. In his company does the disciple find liberation, by chanting Divine laudation."

Guru is thus *brahmgyani* or the God-enlightened at one with the Supreme Being Himself. From this it should be apparent that Guru in Sikhism is equivalent to prophet in other religions.

There is a lot of emphasis on the need for *guru* in *Gurbani*. In fact, there can be no Sikh without Guru. '*Gurules*' is synonymous with evil. In *amrit parchar* seekers are advised to become *Guruwala*. We are familiar with the story of Guru Amardas. Before he came in contact with Guru Angad Dev Ji, he was a worshipper of Ganga Mai and visited Hardwar dutifully every year. Although he led a pious life, a mendicant Sadhu refused to accept meals from his hands, since he had no formal *guru*. This forced his search for a guru, which landed him in the court of Guru Angad. On the importance of guru, Guru Angad says:

"Should a hundred moons rise
and a thousand suns -
With all this illumination, without the,
Guru's guidance all remain pitch dark."

Sikhs are enjoined a total commitment and complete surrender to Guru. Says Guru Arjan:

"The disciple that in the Master's home,
to receive guidance, takes abode,
Should, with his heart, the Master's
guidance accept.

He should never ----- show off his ego;
On the name Divine ever with his heart,
should he meditate.

The disciple that himself to the Master,
should have sold,
Fulfilled shall all his objectives be."

For a Sikh, Guru is Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Thus the first and foremost guru is God Himself. Guru Nanak refers to Him as his won Guru.

In the *Guru Granth* the concept of *Guru* has further been developed to mean the message or the Word of God or the Primal Guru. The message may be revealed through a chosen person or prophet in human form. But that form or body perishes and is not the *guru*. The word is however eternal. Sikhs are, therefore, enjoined to accept the *Shabad* as the *Guru* and none else.

After the philosophy and the Sikh way of life had been explained and demonstrated by Guru Nanak and his nine successors, Guru Gobind Singh carried the concept of the *Shabad Guru* to its logical conclusion, and formally vested the authority of the gurus in *Guru Granth Sahib*, representing their spirit as well as their visible body. And in practice the authority was to be exercised by the Panth in conformity with the commands enshrined in the bani.

Unfortunately, we have not realised the full significance of this great revolutionary step. As a result there is a serious vacuum in the decision making process at Panthic level. Also, due to clever misinterpretation of the emphasis laid on the need for, and the abundant praise showered on guru, numerous deras have sprung up under some clever persons posing as sadhs and sants and virtually enjoying the privileges or gurus by misleading people. And unfortunately, while these deras and schismatic sects are well organised, there is hardly any organised effort to promote the cause of mainstream Sikh thought.

Sangat

Wherever Guru Nanak went during his famous *udasis*, his celestial songs sung by himself to the accompaniment Bhai Mardana's *rabaab*, attracted disciples. The Guru could not stay with them for long. He therefore, organised *sangats* of all local followers in order to continue contemplation of the divine message initiated by him. Sikhism is not merely a discipline for an individual. It demands collective practice by the Society as well. A *sangat* is necessary for that reason also.

Sangat literally means a congregation or company. All congregations cannot, however, be called sangat. It is only a gathering of holy men where the Divine Name alone is cherished that deserves this title. A gathering of thugs is not sangat. While good company elevates one morally and spiritually, bad company leads to degradation. Kabir illustrates the difference:

"The *sandal* wood plant even though surrounded by dhak and idlewood is good.

These too living close to sandalwood turn the same."

"In foul company am I ruined,

As banana plant near ber (jujube),

As shakes the ber, is the plantian pierced,

Look not towards reprobates."

Sangat is an association of equal engaged in noble pursuits. Each member is called a *bhai* (brother). Sangat is thus a brotherhood in the real sense. Its purpose is mutual cooperation for around development of the individual and collective betterment of the group.

Sangat is Guru's own school for imparting Godlike qualities. In fact, God Himself dwells in sangat.

The institution of sangat has far-reaching social implications. It inculcates the feeling of brotherhood, promotes equality and provides opportunity for *sewa*, which is highly prized among Sikhs. It has played a vital role in history as a forum for discussion of common concerns, and planning as well as execution of programmes of social uplift. It seems that Guru Nanak had created a network of sangats spread over vast areas during his lifetime. The network was expanded by his successors, and was functioning effectively. This is testified by the large number of extant *hukumnamas* addressed to various *Sangats*

by the Gurus.

Guru Amardas established 22 *manjis* or preaching districts, and knit the *sangats* into an organised system. Guru Arjun Dev further strengthened the system by appointing *masands* to look after the *sangats* in their respective areas.

Sikh diaspora can now be seen in almost every country of the world. Following the lead given by Guru Nanak they have organised *sangat* wherever they have settled. These *sangat* are the units that constitute the Sikh community or the Panth. During the Guru period, these units looked to the Guru for direction. For performing this function now, it is necessary to create a central representative body drawn from the constituent *sangats*, to look after the affairs of the Panth. SGPC is in a unique position to take an initiative in this direction.

Dharmsal

Dharmsal literally means a place for practice of *dharma* or righteousness. Guru Nanak refers to the Earth as dharmsal, implying that life in this world offers an opportunity to elevate one's soul through noble deeds. Guru Nanak enjoined upon all *Sangats* to erect or set apart a place where they could hold congregation regularly for recitation and contemplation of bani. It was also a meeting place for discussion of their problems and matters of common concern.

These *dharmsals* were expected to provide accommodation and food to wayfarers, and were precursors to the present day Gurdwara. The term Gurdwara came into vogue after *Guru Granth Sahib* began to be installed in the dharmsal. In the course of time a number of activities have been added to the *Gurdwara*. *Langar* is an essential feature. A school, dispensary, sports, library, etc., are increasingly becoming parts of *Gurdwara* complex. Mostly, the social functions, marriages, etc., are also organised in the *Gurdwaras*. In fact, a *Gurdwara* is the pivot of the life of Sikh community. The institution has tremendous potentialities for spreading the word of the Guru worldwide and for a better future for the Sikh Panth. How this potential can be realised, is for this seminar to suggest.

Langar/Pangat

It is a unique Sikh institution which has never failed to impress

non-Sikhs. I represent some basic postulates of Sikhism like equality. It emphasises the need for good food for a normal life which includes bhagti. It recognises the right of everybody to a square meal. Through this institution, the Guru anticipated the present 'World Food Programme', and the 'Freedom from Hunger' campaign. *Langar* inculcates the habit of sharing with others. It provides an opportunity for sewa. History records that highly placed Sikh Sardars like Ala Singh and Jassa Singh as well as their ladies took pride in doing manual work in *langar*. In *langar* all participants eat together without discrimination based on caste or social status. In fact, it was a carefully considered device against the prevailing caste barriers. Guru Amardas was so particular about this, that he would not grant audience to anybody reluctant to partake of *langar* with others. The message of this institution is belief in equality brotherhood, collective effort and concern for others, particularly those in need. Stress should be on the spirit of services and the feeling of fraternity, rather than seating arrangements in *langar*.

Daan

Daan means sharing in Sikhism, and not charity in the usual sense which induces pride. The Guru preached against accumulating of wealth and institutionalised *daan* in the form of *daswandh* or tithe which belongs to the Guru and is meant for collective needs of the community. While *daan* is compulsory for all Sikhs, the Guru has stressed that it should be used sensibly and judiciously. The present *Karsewa* movement which, in practice means demolition of old historic buildings and construction of huge marble structures in their place involving expenditure of billions of rupees, needs to be reviewed in this light. We must pause to think whether we can utilise our limited financial resources for a better purpose. Propagation of the message of the Guru and education and health programmes certainly have a better claim.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it must be stated that the basic Sikh institutions referred to above are sound and as valid today as they were when introduced by the Gurus. Their validity will grow with time. It is necessary, however, to understand their underlying spirit.

Institutionalism that stress mere external form is dangerous. *Shabad Guru* of the *guruship* of *Guru Granth Sahib* represents the most advanced stage in spiritual thought. Effective organisation of Guru Panth is necessary for implementation of this philosophy, and to warn the message against fake Gurus and ever growing number of *deras* misleading and exploiting them. *Sangats* should form the primary units of the Guru Panth. *Langar/Pangat* is a uniting force promoting understanding and kinship of love. *Dharmals* have come to stay and are becoming increasingly important in the form of *Gurudwaras*. They are performing multifarious functions, and offer great potential for sharing the Guru's message with the rest of the humanity. Daan should go into the right channels to ensure *sarbat da bhala* which is the goal of Sikhism as religion of the future.

References

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2. *Ibid.*, p 273.
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7. *Ibid.*, p. 982.
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9. *Ibid.*, p. 1365.
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***Guru Granth Sahib* as Source of History**

Kirpal Singh

Guru Granth, as a source of history and Sikh history, is a new and very significant topic on which no work has been done so far. It is significant as it provides fresh information which is not available anywhere else. For instance details of the invasions of Babar, the founder of Mughal Empire in India are available in several sources including Tazik-i-Babar. What happened to the people as a result of the invasions has only been given by Guru Nanak in hymns in the *Guru Granth*. Similarly, it is not generally known that the milch cattle of the Hindus were taxed. This information is only available in *Asa Di Var* wherein it has been stated that the cow was taxed. Besides direct information one can collect historical information from various similes and metaphors used in the *Guru Granth*. While explaining the spiritual intricacies, similes and metaphors depicting various aspects of life have been given, for instance Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism writes:

Make thy mind ploughman, thy action
cultivation vocation.

Modesty the water and thy body the field.

In the field sow name of God, make content the leveling plank.

And maintain humility as fence of the field.¹

At places prayers have been made to God to save mankind from political affliction like Babar's invasions or tyranny of corrupt officials, etc. All such similes and metaphors and references to political or administrative incidents collectively make an important source of history convening five hundred years from Sheikh Farid (d. 1265 AD) to Guru Tegh Bahadur (d. 1675 AD) life span of all the contributors of the *Guru Granth*. It throw a flood of light on socio-politico-religion life of the people. An attempt was made on similar lines in my book *The Guru Granth As Source of History* published in 1998 (book out

of print). This paper is, however, confined to the aspects only political history and Sikh History

The *Guru Granth* has thirty six contributors including the Sikh Gurus. Its contributors belonged to the different strata of society - so called high caste, and low caste cobber, washerman etc. They belong to different religious traditions and different parts of India. For instance Kabir and Ravidas belongs to Uttar Pardesh, Nam Dev and Tarlochan to Maharashtra, Jaidev to Bengal, Dhanna to Rajasthan, Baba Farid, a Muslim saint to Punjab etc, Long before the dawn of modern civilization based on science and technology, the Sikh scripture taught the lessons of coexistence and toleration which are so essential not only in religious sphere but also in the strife torn national and international spheres.

The *Guru Granth* is a priceless source of history as it provides information which is not available anywhere else. The histories in general and *Taziki-i-Babari* in particular have been given the details of Babar's invasions. But it was reserved for Guru Nanak, 'the people's prophet' as T L Visavni, calls him to record the brutalities of Babar's soldiers on the people. The people's sufferings on account of Babar's invasion have been described in four hymns of Guru Nanak named '*Babar Vani*' in the *Guru Granth*.

In the '*Babarvani*', Guru Nanak has referred to almost all the invasions of Babar but in different way. He was eye-witness of the third invasion which has been described in detail. Guru Nanak's account of Babar's invasions is as follows: Guru Nanak writes:

God brought Khurasan under His protection
and brought terror to Hindustan.²

Zahiruddin Mohammad Babar was born on 24th February 1483 AD. Though young in years Babar formed the resolve of conquering Samarkand which he occupied. Forced by circumstances he left the city, which was captured by Uzbeks. A gain he was able to occupy Samarkand and was defeated in the battle of Archian in June 1503 AD and the city was lost and he had to wander in exile for sometime. Soon he retired toward Kabul and established himself there. Here he took the title of '*Padshah*' which had not yet been adopted by any Timurd. With the help of Ismail, the founder of Safvi line of the kings of Persia he captured Bokhara occupied Samarkand in October 1500 AD. Again

he was defeated by the Uzbeks in 1512 AD and the Persian force sent in his aid was also routed.³ Babar was reduced to great straits in despair he returned to Kabul. He was now convinced of impossibility of gaining success in the west and therefore made up his mind to try his luck in east. Guru Nanak has rightly started:

God has protected Khurasan and brought terror to Hindustan.

According to *Encyclopaedia of Britannica* 'Khurasaan' means 'land of rising sun'. In the sixteenth century Khurasan was the name of territory north of which was Khiva (previously in Russia), a plains of Iran and Sistan in the south, Guz and Gurgaon in the West and Hindustan in the East. At present it is the name of the province of eastern Iran.

In his memoirs Babar writes about Khurasan, the people of Hindustan call every country beyond their own Khurasan in the same manner as Arabs term all except Arabia Ajem. On the road between Hindustan and Khurasan there are two great marts - the one Kabul and the other Kandhar. This country lies between Hindustan and Khurasaan.⁴ Babar informs us that Kandhar was formerly regarded as the boundary between Hindustan and Khurasan.⁵

First Invasion of Babar - 1519 AD

Guru Nanak writes :

But creator Lord takes not the blame upon Himself and so he has made the Mughals Angels of Death.

If the powerful duel with the powerful I grieve not but if a ravenous lion fails upon a flock of sheep then the master must answer.

The 'jewel of my motherland has been laid waste by, But none shall cherish their memory 'when they are gone'.⁶

The first invasion of Babar like his third or fourth invasion caused a considerable misery for the inhabitants of India. The people were mercilessly killed and tortured by the Mughal soldiers as has been testified by Guru Nanak. Babar himself has admitted in his memoirs that his soldiers committed excesses over the people. He writes :

"I sent for the headmen and choudiaries of Bahreh, and agreed with them for the sum of four hundred thousand Shahrukhis (according to Prof Lucas King it was about 20, 000 sterling)

as the ransom of their property, and collectors were appointed to receive the amount... (next day). Having learned that the troops had exercised some severities towards the inhabitants of Bahreh, and were using them all, I sent out a party, who having seized a few of the soldiers that have been quietly of excesses, I put some of them to death and slit the noses of some others, and made them be led towards the camp in that condition.⁷

Entered in dates of Feb 21 and 22, 1519. Mohammad Latif writes :

Having subdued the countries as the Chenab, he advanced at the head of his army to chastise the Ghakkars. The fort of Birhala was invested and Ghakkars were defeated in a sally by Dost Beg, the Mughal general. Babar at the same time cutting off their retreat in person, they were compelled to fly to the mountains and a considerable number of them were killed in flight.⁸

Third Invasion of Babar 1520-21

In his third invasion 1521 AD Babar did not inflict any punishment on the inhabitants of Sialkot because they submitted but the inhabitants of Syedpur modern Eminabad (distt. Gujranwala Pakistan) made themselves liable to punishment by not submitting to Babar's forces. This has been described in his memoirs in the following lines :

'(Babar) advanced to Sialkot the inhabitants of which submitted and saved their possessions but the inhabitants of Syedpur who resisted were put to sword, their wives and children carried into captivity and all their property plundered'.⁹

Guru Nanak being the eye witness of the scene was greatly touched and he has vividly described the excesses of Babar's soldiers on the natives in the following lines. This is the only account available of cruelties committed by the Babar's soldiers :

They who wore beautiful tresses and partings of whose hair were dyed with vermillion have their locks now shorn with scissors and dust is throne upon their heads.

They dwelt in their private chambers, now they cannot find seat in public.

They had hundreds of thousands waiting on their sitting and hundreds of thousands waiting on them standing.

Eating coconuts and dates they sported on their couches, but chains are on their necks and broken are their strings of pearls. The wealth and beauty which afforded them pleasure have now become their enemies. The order was given to the soldiers to take and dishonour them.

They had lost all thought of God in joys, in spectacles and in pleasures, when Babar's rule was proclaimed no Pathan prince ate his food. Some lost their fine times of prayers, other their hours of worship.¹⁰

Babar's invasion greatly upset the existing condition. In another verse Guru Nanak says :

Where are those sports, those stables and those horses? Where those bugles and clarions? Where are those who buckled on their swords and were mighty in battles. Where those scarlet uniforms.¹¹

Guru Nanak being the eyewitness of the scene at Syedpur, modern Eminabad, district Gujranwala (Pakistan) was greatly touched and he has vividly described the excesses of Babar's soldiers on the natives. Guru Nanak writes:

Babar with the wedding party of sin from Kabul rushed down
And forcibly demanded surrender of Indian womanhood
Then went modesty and righteousness into hiding
And falsehood was strutting about in glory
Set aside were Qazis and Brahmins, and Satan went about
solemnizing marriage
Muslims women reciting the Quran, in their affliction called
on Khuda
Other women of low caste and of the Hindus in this suffering
may also be put in the same account
Said Nanank to sing are paeans of blood
And sprinkled in blood for saffron
Nanak sings the glories of Lord in the land of corpses and
mentions this thought.¹²

At another place, Guru Nanak writes:

Dishonoured were women of the Hindus, Muslims Bhattis and Thakurs

Of some were the gowns torn from head to foot

Some in cremation yards found resting places

Those whose gallant menfolk returned not home

In what agony were their nights passed.¹³

Fourth Invasion of Babar - 1524

Guru Nanak writes:

For three hours forty-five minutes, wrath and tyranny ravaged the city of Lahore.¹⁴

It has been recorded in the Babar's memoirs :

He (Babar) marched by the country of Gakhars whom he reduced to obedience. Behar Khan Lodhi, Mubarak Khan Lodhi and some other Afghan Amirs who were still in the interest of Ibrahim or who disliked the arrival of a foreign enemy collected a large body of Afghans and gave him a battle as he approached Lahore. The Afghans were defeated and the conquerors were elated with their success and enraged at the obstinacy of Lahore.¹⁵ Mohammad Latif writes:

Babar made his triumphant entry into the city of Lahore and after fashion common to his tribe set fire to houses. After remaining here for four days he marched against Dipalpur.¹⁶

First Battle of Panipat 20 April, 1526

Guru Nanak says:

There regard a battle between the Mughals and Pathans, and the sword was wielded in the battlefield. They the Mughals arrived and fired their guns and they the Pathans attacked with their elephants.¹⁷

Zahiruddin Babar writes in his memoirs:

'It was settled that as Panipat was a considerable city, it would cover one of our flanks by its buildings and houses, while we might fortify our front by turas or covered defences and cannon and that the matchlockmen and infantry should be placed in rear of guns and turas.¹⁸ With this resolution we moved and in two marches on Thursday, 30th of the last jamada reached Panipat. Babar writes: 'The army of the enemy opposed to us

was estimated at one hundred thousands men, the elephants of the Emperor and his officers were said to amount to nearly a thousands.¹⁹

After the battle of Panipat, elephants were offered to Babar. he has described elephant 'One the two sides of his trunk, in his upper jaw he has two tusks, it is by applying these teeth, and exerting all his force that he overturns walls and tears up trees, and when he fights or performs any operation, that requires great exertion he makes use of these tusks.'²⁰

Flight of Himayun and Rise of Sher Shah Suri

Guru Nanak writes :

'In seventy eight they (the Mughals) came and in ninety seven depart,

Another hero shall day arise

Nanak utters the word of the truth, the truth times call for.'²¹

The different annotators of the *Guru Granth* agree that these lines signify and state that the Mughals came in India in the Bikrmi year of one thousand five hundred and seventy eight viz 1521 AD and departed in the year Bikrami year one thousand five hundred and ninety seven which is equal to 1540 AD. Since the date has been recorded in verse one thousand five hundred has not been mentioned in both the cases. It is taken to be understood. It implies that Guru Nanak made prophecy about the rise of Sher Shah Suri before his death in 1539 AD. This is not improbable, it appears that Guru Nanak was the keen observer of the political developments of his time. He was the contemporary of Himayun and Sher Shah Suri and witnessed the weak rule of the former and the strong will of the latter for nine years after the death of Babar (1530). Guru Nanak's calculation about Mughals and his prophecy about Sher Shah came to be true. It has been stated in *The Crescent in India* by S. R. Sharma that Sher Shah Suri was "most capable unscrupulous ambitious man in the whole of Afghan party."²²

The animals of Hindus like cow, goats, buffaloes were taxed by government, the fact has also been mentioned in the Medieval Indian History by Lanepool. But Guru Nanak has confirmed it in *Asa Di Var*.²³ He says, "You tax cow". Similarly Jaziya on Brahmin had

been reimposed. Guru Nanak mentioned both, he says, "You tax cow and Brahmin".

Cow Tax and Jazia on Brahmins

"You impose tax on cow and tax (jazia) on Brahmins, the cow dung will not save you"²⁴

The Turkish or Afghan rulers were 'unable to establish their power in the rural areas. Here Hindu chief known as Rais, Rana or Rawat who had their armies ruled.²⁵ Guru Nanak refers to the Hindus officials²⁶ who had to collect taxes on behalf of the government. Lanepool writes that the Hindus had to pay duties on buffaloes, goats and other milch cattle. The tax was levied equally on the rich and poor.²⁷

Before Sultan Feroz Tughlaq (1352-1384 AD) Brahmins were exempted from payment of jazia. But Feroz Tughlak imposed this tax on the ground that they were the leaders of the Hindus and they could not be exempted from such a tax. He acted as a tool in the hands of bigoted ulemas and did not care to listen the public entreaties. There was a storm of protest against this decision. The Brahmins surrounded his palace and loudly protested. They threaten to burn themselves alive. But Sultan did not care to listen the public entreaties. There were storm of protest against this decision. The Brahmins surrounded his palace and loudly protested. They threatened to burn themselves alive. But Sultan did not care and did not yield.²⁷ Jaziya was ultimately abolished by Akbar, the Mughal emperor.

Corrupt Revenue Administration

The corruption was rampant in the revenue administration of the Sultans. This has been mentioned almost everywhere but to what extent that corruption was that has been stated by Guru Nanak in Asa Di Var. Guru Nanak says :

Sin is the king, greed the minister, falsehood the officials (shiqdars) to carry out command.

And lust the deputy to take counsel with all three-hold conclave to chalk out plans

The blind subjects out of ignorance pay homage like dead men.²⁹

Guru Nanak (1469-1539AD) had very closely watched the revenue administration of his times as he worked in the *Modikhana*

(storehouse) of Daulat Khan Lodhi at Sultanpur (Distt. Kapurthala) during the reign of Sikandar Lodhi (1488-1517 AD).³⁰ In those days a revenue was collected in kind as there was acute shortage of currency and grain was very cheap.³¹ In the Modikhana 'Landlords, chaudharis, Qanungos (a revenue official) and people in general'³² used to deposit the grain which was distributed to employees, soldiers and different types of people. The officials were given land grants instead of salaries and petty employee grain instead of wages. In this way Guru Nanak came in contact with the various types of people and different rings of society and has described the corruption rampant there.

***Guru Granth* as source of Sikh History**

Like all prophets, Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was greatly misunderstood as he himself writes:

Some brand me as ghost

Some call me man, Nanak is simple humble man.³³

In several hymns preserved in the *Guru Granth* Guru Nanak has dialogues with leaders of various denominations like Sidhas, Pandits, Pirs, Mullan, Qazis etc. There dialogues have been also mentioned by Bhai Gurdas Bhalla who was the first and perhaps the fittest to record the traditions of Guru Nanak. He was nephew of Guru Amardas, the third Sikh and the contemporary of Baba Budha who had seen and served Guru Nanak and had played a leading role in the early Sikh history. The dialogues of Guru Nanak are first rate source of information for constructing the life of the Guru. Any account based on these dialogues can not be rejected wholly as 'unreliable'. Rather such accounts constitute an important sources of information for constructing the life of Guru Nanak. For more details on this subject I would refer to my recently published book entitled '*Janamsakhi Tradition: An Analytical Study*' (available from M/s Singh Brothers, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar).

Guru Nanak in the last phase of his life tested his sons and nominated his successor Bhai Lehna. This has been recorded by *Satta Balwanda ki Var* in the *Guru Granth*:

The Master's sons obeyed not his decree

And from the Preceptor turned their faces away

With hearts dishonest, in disobedience they went along
 Carrying on head trussed loads of pride
 As Guru Nanak decreed, did Guru Angad act;
 By thus, acting was he on the throne installed
 Who lost, who won ?³⁴

After his nomination as successor of Guru Nanak Guru Angad shifted to Khadur Sahib (Distt. Amritsar) as it has been stated there in the same Var.

The holy preceptor Phero's son then in Khadur took abode.³⁵ Khivi, wife of Guru Angad has been described a noble lady who used to manage the common kitchen meant for Sikhs. The condition of the food served there has been testified to be excellent. Satta Balwand in their Var in the Ramkali raga record:

Saith Balwand the bard: Khivi, noble soul
 Was like tree with shade of thick leaves
 In her kitchen was distributed rich fare
 Khir enriched with ghee, tasting like amrita elixir
 The faces of the Masters disciples became radiant
 The egoists, shrunk like straw
 Guru Angad, acting heroically with the Master, found approval
 Mother Khivi's wedded lord was he who carried earth's burden.³⁶

The visit of Guru Amar Das to Kurukshetra and Hardwar

In the *Guru Granth*, Jethaji who subsequently became the fourth Guru viz Guru Ram Das has recorded the account of Guru Amar Das's visit to Kurukshetra and Hardwar as he accompanied the guru there.

In the hymn such words have been used that help to decipher the date of guru's visit to Kurukshetra and Hardwar.

A sight of the true Guru was our bathing during the Abhijit.....
 The filth of evil inclinations was cleansed and the darkness of ignorance was dispelled
 The ignorance of those who saw the guru was dispelled and light beamed on their hearts
 The pain of transmigrantion vanished in a moment;
 and men obtained God, the imperishable Lord.
 God the creator himself made this auspicious

time, when the true Guru went to the fair at Kurukshetra

A sight of the true Guru was our bathing during Abhijit.³⁷

After Kurukshetra the visit to River Jamuna has been described :

The Guru then proceeded to the Jamuna

Where he caused the people to repeat Guru's name

The tax collected met the Guru with offering and allowed his followers to cross over

All those in the Guru's train who meditated on God were exempted from toll

Death, the tax gatherer, approached not those who walk in the true way to the Guru's instruction

Everybody took Guru's name and by doing it all the pilgrims were excused tax:

The Guru then proceeded to the Jamuna where he caused people to repeat God's name.³⁸

After attending the solar eclipse festival of bathing and addressing a number of different types of pilgrims Guru Amar Das proceeded to Hardwar (Mayapur). There was no place of pilgrimage on the river Jamuna on his way from Kurukshetra to Hardwar. Nor there is any mention of the place of pilgrimage there. So the Guru had not to pay pilgrimage tax while crossing the Jamuna river. The mention of tax in the sacred hymns refers to the river toll which was those days as it has been mentioned in *Ain-i-Akbari*.³⁹

Impressed by the Guru's august personality, the tax collector under the circumstances exempted the Guru and his Sikhs from payment of river toll. Guru Ram Das has, therefore, rightly stated, 'the tax gatherer met the Guru with offerings and allowed his followers to cross over.'⁴⁰ Since the river toll was paid in *Dams*, Guru Ram Das has used the word *Dam* twice in the hymn.⁴¹

After that he (Guru Amar Das) went to the Ganges and there was marvelous scene.

All were entranced on seeing the saintly Guru, there too no one took half a dam from him.

No one paid half a *dam* or put any money into the toll box, the toll collector's mouth were sealed. They said 'brethern what shall we do? Of whom shall we ask? Everyone is escaping under the cover of the Guru.

The tax collectors by their skill and cleverness saw it was best to close their boxes and go away.

After that the Guru went to the Ganges and there was a marvelous scene.⁴²

In the hymn cited there is a mention of tax gatherer or toll collector. Dr Gopal Singh⁴³ and Prof Gurbachan Singh Talib in their respective translations have stated that it was a pilgrimage tax which was abolished by Akbar and Mughal Emperor in 1562 AD.⁴⁴ Prof Teja Singh also refers to the pilgrimage tax.⁴⁵ Dr Balbir Singh while discussing the various dates of Guru Amar Das's visit to Kurukshetra calls this toll as pilgrimage tax.⁴⁶ But this does not appear to be the pilgrimage tax. Had it been the pilgrimage tax it would have been levied at Kurukshetra where Abhijit Solar eclipse fair was held. It was a very rare occasion and must have attracted thousands of pilgrims. The pilgrims at solar eclipse fairs were taxed during Aurangzeb's time. Bernier mentions that pilgrimage tax was reimposed by Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor, and lakhs of rupees were collected by the state on the occasion of eclipse of sun.⁴⁵ There is no mention of any tax at Kurukshetra solar eclipse fair. This is one of the most important factors to be considered. There is mention of toll tax at the river Jamuna. No place of pilgrimage has been mentioned there. Evidently on the river Jamuna there could not be levied pilgrimage tax for crossing the river. Therefore it is river toll. It is significant to note that rivers toll tax has been mentioned in *Ain-i-Akbari* as quoted above: Similarly there were river toll collectors at river Ganges. In the hymn itself only two rivers are mentioned. Jamuna and Ganges. At both the places tax collectors were so suppressed by the holy personality of the Guru that they greeted the Guru with offerings. Guru Ram Das reports 'All were entranced on seeing the saintly Guru and no one took even half dam'.

The date of Guru's visit to Kurukshetra

A sight of the true Guru was our bathing during Abhijit.

The system of quoting dates of nakshatras is very old and had prevailed in India since the Vedic times. There are twenty seven nakshatras or lunar mansions through which the moon passes in her monthly journey through the stars. Moon is supposed to spend an equal amount of time in each of 27

nakshatras and as the total period of moon's journey through the stars occupies 27.33166 days, it follows that the means duration of each nakshatras is 1 day and nearly 18 minutes.⁴⁷ in order to make up this deficiency occasionally that is, seven times in 19 years, a lunar month is repeated twice in course of the same year. M A Macauliffe explains the word Abhijit in a footnote in the following words: "The lunar month, though generally considered twenty eight days is really only twenty seven days, odd hours, minutes and seconds. Abhijit was intercalated between the 21st and 22nd asterisms to adjust the difference."⁴⁸

According to *Tika Faridkoti* of the *Guru Granth* the interpretation and meanings of the above quoted lines are :

"At Kurukshetar it was the occasion of Amavas with Abhijit Nachhatar which is called Abhich and bathing festival of solar eclipse when at that time the congregation of three worlds had the holy sight of Guru Amar Das, the worthy of worship."⁴⁹

In this way the scriptural text provides following astronomical data for determining the date of the Guru's visit to Kurukshetra :

1. It was a solar eclipse which is always on *Amavas*.
2. It was Abhijit *Nakshatra*.

Guru Amar Das, the third Sikh Guru became Guru on 29th March 1552 and died on 1st September 1574 AD.⁴² During this period of about twenty two years there were solar eclipse on the following days:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. January 14, 1553 | 2. June 18, 1555 |
| 3. November 14, 1555 | 4. May 9, 1556 |
| 5. November 2, 1556 | 6. October 22, 1557 |
| 7. April 18, 1558 | 8. February 26, 1560 |
| 9. August 21, 1560 | 10. Feb. 14, 1561 |
| 11. August 10, 1561 | 12. Dec. 15, 1563 |
| 13. June 8, 1564 | 14. April 9, 1567 |
| 15. Sept. 21, 1568 | 16. Feb 5, 1570 |
| 17. July 21, 1571 | 18. January 15, 1572 |
| 19. July 9, 1572. 50 | |

According to Dr Balbir Singh,

"the conjunction of the Abhijit Nakshatras in respect of these 19 eclipses occurred twice only. First it was on January 14,

1553 AD and secondly on January 15, 1572AD."⁵¹

How Dr. Balbir Singh was able to find out these two dates and on what basis is not clear. However, it is learnt that Dr. Balbir Singh took lot of pains to consult the experts at various places like Hardwar etc. Dr. Balbir Singh has concluded that Jan 14, 1553 is the date of Guru's visit to Kurukshetra on account of following reasons :

Dr. Balbir Singh writes,

"In the same hymn of *Guru Granth Sahib* there is mention of the collectors who were posted to collect dues from the pilgrims. This was the imposition under the central ruling authority on the Hindu sacred places... As is well known the pilgrim tax was remitted by Akbar in AD 1563. This imperial declaration which is dated incident by virtue of which pilgrim tax was abolished helps to resolve the dilemma of the choice between the two alternatives. The date of the visit of Guru Amar Das to Kurukshetra is thus pin pointed to Jan 14, 1553.

On careful reading of the hymn in the *Guru Granth Sahib* it becomes clear that the tax collectors were not at Kurukshetra, a place of pilgrimage of Hindus where solar eclipse fair was held. The tax-collectors were on the banks of the river Jamuna and the Ganga. Hence they were not collecting the pilgrim's tax as stated by Dr Balbir Singh they were collecting river toll tax which has been clearly mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari* vide Blockmann's translation of page 292 quoted already. It will, therefore, be wrong to pin point the date of Guru's visit to the time of pilgrim's tax. Hence the second date viz. Jan. 15, 1572 appears to be more probable for following reasons:

1. In the first year of his ascending *gaddi* Guru *Amardas* retired to Basarke (District Amritsar) and secluded himself there. This was done to avoid the dispute with Dattu the son of Guru Angad who wanted to be the Guru in succession to his father. With great difficulty he was persuaded to come back to Goindwal by Baba Budha. Under the circumstances Guru Amardas could not leave Goindwal for going on pilgrimage during the very first year of his Guruship.

2. In the hymn it has been stated that Guru Amar Das had very impressive gathering with him while he was visiting Kurukshetra and Hardwar. His august and mature personality greatly impressed the tall collectors even. He explained the principles of Sikhism to different

Hindu denominations viz. Jogis, Saniasis, Jangams, Bodhis, Sarewarhs, and Bairagis. The was more probable in the later age.

3. The historical circumstances and the recorded Sikh traditions about Guru's life point to the fact that Guru undertook his pilgrimage in the later life. Hence Jan. 15, 1572 AD appears to be probable date.

Guru Ram Das

How Guru Ram Das, the fourth Guru was made the Guru has been described by Sundar, the great grand son of Guru Amar Das, the third Sikh Guru in a verse in *Guru Granth*, Sunder was grandson of Mohri, (son of Anand).

As had the holy Guru guided, his disciples to his will bowed
Came forward his son Mohri, and touched Ram Das's feet;
All touched the Guru's feet, on whom had the holy master his
own light conferred

Any that out of envy refrained from bowing

In the end by the Master's commandments their obeisance
offered

By the Divine will was this greatness conferred

As writ since Primal Times by the Lord predestined

Saith Sundar, listen all you devoted to the Master

The whole world at Ram Das's feet made obeisance.⁵²

(*Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 923-24)

It is significant to note that Baba Mohan, the eldest son of Guru Amar Das was conspicuous by absence on the occasion of succession ceremony of Guru Ram Das.

Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru had three sons - Prithichand, Mahadev and Arjan. The youngest son who became Guru Arjan was considered fittest to succeed. On this issue the eldest son Pirthichand fell out with his father who admonished him not to run after wealth and remember the name of God. He writes in a hymn in the *Guru Granth*:

My son why with your father make contention?

He who brought you to birth and maturity

Sin it is with him to contend. (I-Pause)

Wealth that you are so proud of, with none lasts.

In an instant poisonous Maya - pleasures desert and then come

regrets

Contemplate you the Lord who is your Master

Nanak, servant of God thus instructs you

Should you listen to it, will your agony be ended.⁵³

Prithichand paid no heed to his father's advice and continued enmity with his younger brother Guru Arjan. It is presumed that Pirthichand persuaded Sulhi Khan, a Mughal official, to lead an attack on Guru Arjan but his plan was foiled as his horse along with its rider fell in the burning brick kiln and both were killed.⁵⁴ This was very serious crisis for Guru Arjan who referred this incident at a few places in his verse in the *Guru Granth*.

At first I was counseled to sent a letter, secondly I was advised to send two men to mediate.⁵⁵

At another places, Guru Arjan writes:

God preserved me from Sulhi, (Sulhi Khan's attack) Sulhi by no means succeeded Sulhi died unclean

God drew forth His axe and smote off his head and in a moment he became ashed

He was consumed over meditating evil. he who created him thrust him into the fire.

Son, friend, wife, nothing remains with him now, his brethren and relations have all abandoned him.

Said Nanak, I am sacrifice to that God who fulfilled the words of His servant.⁵⁶

In similar strain is the hymn of Guru Arjan on page 1138 'His slave, the Lord hugs to his bosom. The slanderer. he throws in the fire.'⁵⁷

Guru Arjan and Akbar Mughal Emperor

Guru Arjan writes:

The memoranda⁵⁸ against me has proved false.

And the slanderers have come to grievous loss.

He whose support is Govind, the supporter of earth, Him the Yama touches not.

He who utters falsehood in true court, he, the blind one, strikes his head and writhes his hands (in remorse).

Then all ailments afflict, they who sin. For Lord Himself is

the Judge of them.

We are bound by our own actions and our riches forsake us
when life departs.

Nanak sought the refuge of the Lord's True Court. And so his
Honour who saved by Lord, the Lord.⁵⁹

In the hymn quoted above, Guru Arjan the fifth Guru (1581-1606) refers to the complaint made against him to the Emperor Akbar, some Pandits and Qazis had enmity towards the Guru on account of his compilation of the *Guru Granth*. They complained to the Emperor that the Guru had compiled a book in which Mohammedan, prophets and the Hindu incarnations and gods were spoken of with contempt. It was the year 1598 when the Emperor was in the Punjab. Upon this the Emperor ordered that the Guru and the *Guru Granth* should be produced before him. The Guru sent Baba Budha and Bhai Gurdas with the copy of the *Guru Granth*⁶⁰ which was being compiled in 1598 (compilation completed in 1604 AD).

The first hymn which caught the Emperor's eye was Guru Arjan's own composition in Persian language:⁶¹

From earth and light God made the world

They sky, earth, trees and water are God's creation

O man whatever the eye can behold is perishable

The world is eater of carrion, neglectful of God and greedy of
mammon

Like an ogre on a beast, it eateth forbidden food

Restrainst thy hearts, or the omnipotent will take and punish
thee in hell.

When Azrail shall seize thee of what avail

Shall patrons, brothers, courts and possessions and mansions

The pure God knoweth thy condition

Slave Nanak utter thy prayer to the holy man to guide thee.⁶²

The Emperor found nothing objectionable. The slanderer of the Guru represented that it was specially selected for the Emperor's hearing. Now the Emperor himself turned the pages and pointing to a particular spot asked Bhai Gurdas to read. The hymn which begins with the following lines was read:

'Thou fastenest a stone to thy neck,

And sees not God who dwelleth in the heart.⁶³

Akbar expressed deep appreciation for the book. In the *Khulastut Twarikh*, Sujan Rai Bhandari of Batala states that while returning from Lahore Akbar stayed on the bank of river Beas and saw Guru Arjan, the successor of Baba Nanak and heard his verses.⁶⁴ The Emperor also remitted a portion of the years revenue of the Zamindars whose hardships were brought to his notice by the Guru.⁶⁵

Abul Fazal in the *Akbarnamah* states that on the thirteen of the month of Azar (Jamald-ul-Sani) of forty third year of Akbar's reign (24 November 1598) Akbar with gorgeous military retinue crossed the Beas and saw Guru Arjan. People revered the successor Guru as spiritual leaders and solicited their benedictions.⁶⁶

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2. *Ibid*, p. 360 : ਖੁਰਾਸਾਨ ਖਸਮਾਨਾ ਕੀਆ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੁ ਡਰਾਇਆ ॥
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ਆਪੈ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਚਤਾਇਆ ॥
ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ ॥੧॥
ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਸੇਈ ॥
ਜੇ ਸਕਤਾ ਸਕਤੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਰੋਸੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਸਕਤਾ ਸੀਹੁ ਮਾਰੇ ਪੈ ਵਗੈ ਖਸਮੈ ਸਾ ਪੁਰਸਾਈ ॥
ਰਤਨ ਵਿਗਾੜਿ ਵਿਗੋਏ ਕੁਤੀ ਮੁਇਆ ਸਾਰ ਨ ਕਾਈ ॥
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10. *The Guru Granth*, p. 417
ਜਿਨ ਸਿਰਿ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਪਟੀਆ ਮਾਂਗੀ ਪਾਇ ਸੰਧੂਰੁ ॥
ਸੇ ਸਿਰ ਕਾਤੀ ਮੁੰਨੀਅਨਿ ਗਲ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਵੈ ਧੂੜਿ ॥
ਅੰਦਰਿ ਹੋਈਆ ਹੁਣਿ ਬਹਣਿ ਨ ਮਿਲਨਿ ਹਢੂਰਿ ॥੧॥.....
ਇਕੁ ਲਖੁ ਲਹਨਿ ਬਹਿਠੀਆ ਲਖੁ ਲਹਨਿ ਖੜੀਆ ॥
ਗਰੀ ਛੁਹਾਰੇ ਖਾਂਦੀਆ ਮਾਣਨਿ ਸੇਜਤੀਆ ॥
ਤਿਨੁ ਗਲਿ ਸਿਲਕਾ ਪਾਈਆ ਤੁਟਨਿ ਮੋਤਸਰੀਆ ॥੩॥
ਪਨੁ ਜੋਬਨੁ ਦੁਇ ਵੈਰੀ ਹੋਏ ਜਿਨੀ ਰਖੇ ਰੰਗੁ ਲਾਇ ॥

ਦੂਤਾ ਨੇ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ ਲੈ ਚਲੇ ਪਤਿ ਗਵਾਇ ॥
ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਦੇ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਜੇ ਭਾਵੈ ਦੇਇ ਸਜਾਇ ॥੪॥
ਅਗੋ ਦੇ ਜੇ ਚੇਤੀਐ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਇਤੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ ॥
ਸਾਹਾਂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਗਵਾਈਆ ਰੰਗਿ ਤਮਾਸੈ ਚਾਇ ॥
ਬਾਬਰਵਾਣੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਗਈ ਕੁਇਰੁ ਨ ਚੋਟੀ ਖਾਇ ॥੫॥
ਇਕਨਾ ਵਖਤ ਖੁਆਈਅਹਿ ਇਕਨਾ ਪੂਜਾ ਜਾਇ ॥

11. *Ibid.*, p. 417 :

ਕਹਾ ਸੁ ਖੇਲ ਤਬੇਲਾ ਘੋੜੇ ਕਹਾ ਭੇਰੀ ਸਹਨਾਈ ॥
ਕਹਾ ਸੁ ਤੇਗਬੰਦ ਗਾਡੇਰਤਿ ਕਹਾ ਸੁ ਲਾਲ ਕਵਾਈ ॥

12. *Ibid.*, p. 722

ਪਾਪ ਕੀ ਜੰਵ ਲੈ ਕਾਬਲਹੁ ਧਾਇਆ ਜੋਰੀ ਮੰਗੈ ਦਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥
ਸਰਮੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦੁਇ ਛਪਿ ਖਲੋਏ ਕੂੜੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥
ਕਾਜੀਆ ਬਾਮਣਾ ਕੀ ਗਲ ਬਕੀ ਅਗਦੁ ਪੜੈ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥
ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੀਆ ਪੜਹਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਕਸਟ ਮਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥
ਜਾਤਿ ਸਨਾਤੀ ਹੋਰਿ ਹਿਦਵਾਣੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਭੀ ਲੋਧੇ ਲਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥
ਖੂਨ ਕੇ ਸੋਹਿਲੇ ਗਾਵੀਅਹਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਚਤੁ ਕਾ ਕੁੰਗੁ ਪਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥੧॥
ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੇ ਗੁਣ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗਾਵੈ ਮਾਸ ਪੁਰੀ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਖੁ ਮਸੇਲਾ ॥

13. *Ibid.*, p. 418

ਇਕ ਹਿੰਦਵਾਣੀ ਅਵਰ ਤੁਰਕਾਣੀ ਭਟਿਆਣੀ ਠਕੁਰਾਣੀ ॥
ਇਕਨਾ ਪੋਰਣ ਸਿਰ ਖੁਰ ਪਾਟੇ ਇਕਨਾ ਵਾਸੁ ਮਸਾਣੀ ॥
ਜਿਨ੍ਹ ਕੇ ਬੰਕੇ ਘਰੀ ਨ ਆਇਆ ਤਿਨ੍ਹ ਕਿਉ ਰੈਣਿ ਵਿਹਾਣੀ ॥

14. *Ibid.*, p. 1412

ਲਾਹੌਰ ਸਹਰੁ ਜਹਰੁ ਕਹਰੁ ਸਵਾ ਪਹਰੁ ॥

15. *Memoirs of Babar*, op., p. 151

16. *History of Punjab*, Syed Mohammad Latif, op. cit., p. 123

17. *Guru Granth*, p. 418

ਮੁਗਲ ਪਠਾਣਾ ਭਈ ਲੜਾਈ ਰਣ ਮਹਿ ਤੇਗ ਵਗਾਈ ॥
ਓਨ੍ਹੀ ਤੁਪਕ ਤਾਣਿ ਚਲਾਈ ਓਨ੍ਹੀ ਹਸਤਿ ਚਿੜਾਈ ॥

18. *Memoirs of Babar*, op. cit., p. 182-183

19. *Ibid.*, p. 183

20. *Ibid.*, p. 211

21. *Guru Granth*, p. 723

ਆਵਨਿ ਅਠਤਰੈ ਜਾਨਿ ਸਤਾਨਵੈ ਹੋਰੁ ਭੀ ਉਠਸੀ ਮਰਦ ਕਾ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

22. *The Crescent in India*, S R Sharma, p. 279

23. *Asa Di Var As source of History*, Journal of Sikh Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Vol. No. 17, 1990-2

24. *Guru Granth*, p. 471

ਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਉ ਕਰੁ ਲਾਵਹੁ ਗੋਬਰਿ ਤਰਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥

25. *Some aspect of Religion and Political Life in India during 13th century*, Introduction by Mohammad Habib (K A Nizami), Delhi 1961, p. XX

26. Even under the Muslim rulers the Khattris had been appointed to high administrative posts. *Glossary of Tribes and Castes*, by H A Rose, Vol. II, p. 506
27. Lanepool, *Medieval India*, p. 104, *History of Punjab*, Vol. III, edited Fauja Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1972, p. 258
28. Cambridge History of India, Vol. III, p. 108
29. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 768-69
 ਲਬੁ ਪਾਪੁ ਦੁਇ ਰਾਜਾ ਮਹਤਾ ਕੁੜੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਿਕਦਾਰੁ ॥
 ਕਾਮੁ ਨੇਬੁ ਸਦਿ ਪੁਛੀਐ ਬਹਿ ਬਹਿ ਕਰੇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
 ਅੰਧੀ ਰਯਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੂਣੀ ਭਾਹਿ ਭਰੇ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ॥
30. All Janamsakhis of Guru Nanak agree that Guru Nanak got employment in the Modi Khana of Daulat Khan Lodhi Sultanpur, the headquarter of his Jagir. For more details vide Janamsakhi Parampara, Kirpal Singh, Pbi University, Patiala 1969, p. 13-14.
31. Agrarian system of Moslem India, W H Moreland, Allahabad, 1929, p. 68.
32. Janamsakhi Guru Nanak Meharban, Ed Kirpal Singh, Amritsar, 1961, p. 76
33. *Guru Granth*, p. 991
 ਕੋਈ ਆਖੈ ਭੂਤਨਾ ਕੋ ਕਹੈ ਬੇਤਾਲਾ ॥
 ਕੋਈ ਆਖੈ ਆਦਮੀ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਵੇਚਾਰਾ ॥
34. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 967
 ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਕਉਲੁ ਨ ਪਾਲਿਓ ਕਰਿ ਪੀਰਹੁ ਕੰਨ੍ਹ ਮੁਰਟੀਐ ॥
 ਦਿਲਿ ਖੋਟੈ ਆਕੀ ਫਿਰਨਿ ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਭਾਰੁ ਉਚਾਇਨਿ ਛਟੀਐ ॥
 ਜਿਨਿ ਆਖੀ ਸੋਈ ਕਰੇ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਤੀ ਤਿਨੈ ਬਟੀਐ ॥
 ਕਉਣੁ ਹਾਰੇ ਕਿਨਿ ਉਵਟੀਐ ॥
35. *Guru Granth*, p. 967
 ਫੇਰਿ ਵਸਾਇਆ ਫੇਰੁਆਇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਖਾਡੂਰੁ ॥
36. *Ibid.*, p. 967
 ਬਲਵੰਤ ਖੀਵੀ ਨੇਕ ਜਨ ਜਿਸੁ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਛਾਉ ਪਤਾਲੀ ॥
 ਲੰਗਰਿ ਦਉਲਤਿ ਵੰਡੀਐ ਰਸੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਖੀਰਿ ਘਿਆਲੀ ॥
 ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਕੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਥੀਏ ਪਰਾਲੀ ॥
 ਪਏ ਕਬੂਲੁ ਖਸੰਮ ਨਾਲਿ ਜਾਂ ਘਾਲ ਮਰਦੀ ਘਾਲੀ ॥
 ਮਾਤਾ ਖੀਵੀ ਸਹੁ ਸੋਇ ਜਿਨਿ ਗੋਇ ਉਠਾਲੀ ॥
37. *Guru Granth*, p. 1116-17
 ਨਾਵਣ ਪੁਰਬ ਅਭੀਚ ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦਰਸ ਭਇਆ ॥
 ਤੀਰਥ ਉਦਮੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕੀਆ ਸਭ ਲੋਕ ਉਧਰਣ ਅਰਥਾ ॥
 ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੰਥਿ ਚਲੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਿਖਾ ॥
 ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਆਏ ਕੁਲਖੇਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੁਰਬੁ ਹੋਆ ॥
 ਜੋਗੀ ਦਿਗੰਬਰ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਖਟੁ ਦਰਸਨ ਕਰਿ ਗਏ ਗੋਸਟਿ ਢੋਆ ॥
 ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਆਏ ਕੁਲਖੇਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੁਰਬੁ ਹੋਆ ॥

38. *Guru Granth*, p. 1116
ਦੁਤੀਆ ਜਮ੍ਹਨ ਗਏ ਗੁਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪਨੁ ਕੀਆ ॥
ਜਾਗਾਤੀ ਮਿਲੇ ਦੇ ਭੇਟ ਗੁਰ ਪਿਛੈ ਲੰਘਾਇ ਦੀਆ ॥
39. Ain-i-Akbari, translated by the Blackman, Delhi, 1965, p. 292. The following sums are levied as river toll. For every boat, Rs 1 per kos at the rate of 1000 mans, provided the boat and the men belong to one and the same owner. But if the boat belongs to another man and every thing in the boat to the man who has hired it, the tax is R 1 for every 2½ kos. At ferry places an elephant has to pay 10 d(dam) for crossing, a laden cart 4 d, empty 2 d, a laden camel 1 d, empty camels, horses, cattle with their things 1 d, other beast of burden pay 1/10 d. Twenty people pay 1 D for crossing, but they are often taken gratis. The rule is that one half or one third of the tolls thus collected go to the state (and the other half goes to the boatman).
40. *Guru Granth*, p. 1116
ਜਾਗਾਤੀ ਮਿਲੇ ਦੇ ਭੇਟ ਗੁਰ ਪਿਛੈ ਲੰਘਾਇ ਦੀਆ ॥
41. *Ibid.*,
ਸਭ ਮੋਹੀ ਦੇਖਿ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਸੰਤ ਕਿਨੈ ਆਵੁ ਨ ਦਾਮੁ ਲਇਆ ॥
ਆਵੁ ਦਾਮੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਪਇਆ ਨ ਬੋਲਕ ਜਾਗਾਤੀਆ ਮੋਹਣ ਮੁੰਦਇ ਪਈ ॥
42. Macauliffe Sikh Religion, Vol. II, p. 114.
43. Dr Gopal Singh, translation *Guru Granth Sahib*, Vol. IV, p. 1068.
44. Gurbachan Singh Talib, Translation *Guru Granth Sahib*, Vol. IV, p. 2271, footnote 2.
45. *Shabdarth*, SGPC, Amritsar, Vol. IV, p. 1116; footnote.
46. *Punjab Past and Present*, Punjabi University, Patiala, Oct 1979, p. 344
47. L. D. Swami Kannu Pillay, *An Indian Ephemeris*, Vol I, p. 8-9
48. M A Macauliffe, *Sikh Religion*, Vol. II, p. 112
49. *The Guru Granth Sahib Steek* (Farid Koti Tika), Patiala, 1970, Vol. II, p. 2287
50. *An Indian Ephemeris*, Vol. V, p. 308-347
51. *The Punjab Past and Present*, Punjab University., Patiala, Oct 1974, p. 399
52. *Guru Granth*, p. 923-24
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਜਿ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਮੰਨਿ ਲਈ ਰਜਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਮੋਹਰੀ ਪੁਤ੍ਰੁ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਹੋਇਆ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਸਭ ਪਵੈ ਪੈਰੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕੇਰੀ ਜਿਥੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਆਪੁ ਰਖਿਆ ॥
ਕੋਈ ਕਰਿ ਬਖੀਲੀ ਨਿਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਆਣਿ ਨਿਵਾਇਆ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰਹਿ ਭਾਣਾ ਦੀਈ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਧੁਰਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਲੇਖੁ ਰਜਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਕਹੈ ਸੁੰਦਰੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸਭੁ ਜਗਤੁ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥੬॥੧॥
53. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1200
ਕਾਹੇ ਪੂਤ ਝਗਰਤ ਹਉ ਸੀਗਿ ਬਾਪ ॥

ਜਿਨ ਕੇ ਜਣੇ ਬਡੀਰੇ ਤੁਮ ਹਉ ਤਿਨ ਸਿਉ ਝਗਰਤ ਪਾਪ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
 ਜਿਸੁ ਧਨ ਕਾ ਤੁਮ ਗਰਬੁ ਕਰਤ ਹਉ ਸੈ ਧਨੁ ਕਿਸਹਿ ਨ ਆਪ ॥
 ਖਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਛੋਡਿ ਜਾਇ ਬਿਖਿਆ ਰਸੁ ਤਉ ਲਗੈ ਪਛੁਤਾਪ ॥੧॥
 ਜੋ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਹੋਤੇ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਹਰਿ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਜਾਪਹੁ ਜਾਪ ॥
 ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਰਤ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਤੁਮ ਕਉ ਜਉ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਤਉ ਜਾਇ ਸੰਤਾਪ ॥

54. Bhai Khan Singh Nabha, Mahankosh (Punjabi) under Sulhi Khan and Kotha Guru.

55. *Guru Granth*, p. 371

ਪ੍ਰਥਮੇ ਮਤਾ ਜਿ ਪਤ੍ਰੀ ਚਲਾਵਉ ॥ ਦੁਤੀਏ ਮਤਾ ਦੁਇ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਪਹੁਚਾਵਉ ॥

56. *Ibid.*, p. 825

ਸੁਲਹੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਰਾਖੁ ॥

ਸੁਲਹੀ ਕਾ ਹਾਥੁ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਪਹੁਚੈ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਹੋਇ ਮੂਆ ਨਾਪਾਕੁ ॥੧॥

ਮੰਦਾ ਚਿਤਵਤ ਚਿਤਵਤ ਪਚਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਰਚਿਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਦੀਨਾ ਧਾਕੁ ॥੧॥

ਪੁਤ੍ਰੁ ਮੀਤ ਧਨੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਨ ਰਹਿਓ ਸੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਗਇਆ ਸਭ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਕੁ ॥

57. *Ibid.*, p. 1138

ਅਪਣੇ ਦਾਸ ਕਉ ਕੰਠਿ ਲਗਾਵੈ ॥

ਨਿੰਦਕ ਕਉ ਅਗਨਿ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥੧॥

58. The actual word in Gurbani is Mehzarnama which according to Steingrass, Persian English Dictionary means document attested by witnesses. It was a type of summon which was issued on the complaint of people. Here complaint was made by Brahman Mullans, against the Guru.

59. *Guru Granth*, p. 119

ਮਹਜਰੁ ਭੂਠਾ ਕੀਤੋਨੁ ਆਪਿ॥ ਪਾਪੀ ਕਉ ਲਗਾ ਸੰਤਾਪੁ ॥੧॥

ਜਿਸਹਿ ਸਹਾਈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਮੇਰਾ॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਕਉ ਜਮੁ ਨਹੀ ਆਵੈ ਨੇਰਾ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਸਾਚੀ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੋਲੈ ਕੂੜੁ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਹਾਥ ਪਛੋਤੈ ਅੰਧਾ ਮੂੜੁ ॥

60. *Twariikh Guru Khalsa*, Language Deptt. Patiala, p. 406-7, Macauliffe Sikh Religion, Vol. III, p. 81-82-83.

61. *Ibid.*

62. *Guru Granth*, p. 723

ਖਾਕ ਨੂਰ ਕਰਦੰ ਆਲਮ ਦੁਨੀਆਇ ॥

ਅਸਮਾਨ ਜਿਮੀ ਦਰਖਤ ਆਬ ਪੈਦਾਇਸਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ ॥੧॥

63. *Ibid.*, p. 738-39

ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥

64. *Khulasatut, Twariikh*, Sujan Rai (Punjabi) Punjabi University, Patiala, 1972, p. 436.

65. *Ibid.*

66. *Akbar Namah*, Abul Fazal, Vol. III, Lucknow 1883, p. 514, quoted in Makhaz-e-Twariikh Sikhs SGPC, Amritsar, p. 191.

Humanism of *Guru Granth Sahib*

Jaswinder Kaur Dhillon

Humanism is any view that considers the well being of man in this life, as opposed to the next, to be of primary importance. Renaissance humanism grew in Europe as a revolt against the Church's restrictions on knowledge and lay emphasis on man's acquiring knowledge and fulfilling himself in this life. Naturalistic humanism, the 20th-century philosophy, rejects belief in all forms of the supernatural. It maintains that the good of man on this earth is the supreme ethical goal, and relies on reason, science and democracy for the solution of human problems. It is a logical outcome of the 19th-century French philosopher Auguste Comte's positivism and utilitarianism of British philosopher Jeremy Bentham. While Comte, the founding father of 'sociology' professed that science could ultimately answer all questions of philosophy, and philosophical problems would be solved by sociology, Bentham, an economist and lawyer, had propagated the maxim that "The right action is that which produces the greatest happiness in the greatest number of people."

Humanism is thus man centred rather than divinity centred as most main religions of the world are. The idea of humanism is, however, as old as the Greek philosophy and is quite predominant in the Vedic and Buddhist philosophies too. Dr. Wazir Singh holds that "Concern for the welfare of man and the human species can be discerned in the writings of both the theists and naturalists, though the meaning and significance of humanism has varied from person to person and school to school." All religions are basically concerned with the welfare of man and human species, but they generally tend to achieve this aim through divine intervention. On the other hand the doctrine of humanism that grew in the West of Middle Ages seeks to achieve it by human efforts without any dependence upon the divine.

However, the Indian sub-continent had never faced the adverse politico-religious conditions which the Europe had faced in the Dark

and Middle Ages, for which reason an independent movement of humanism did not grow here and Indian humanism is mostly religion based. For example, when in India, the exploitative priestly class, and the narrow caste-system nurtured by it, had become too oppressive during the pre-Christian period, it had given birth to religion-based humanism in the shape of Buddhism . During the second millennium, humanistic Bhakti Movement had come up in reaction to the combined exploitation by the Hindu and Muslim priestly classes. Bhakti Movement had spawned many new reformist faiths like Dadu-panth. However Sikhism which gave greater importance to humanism than to divinity, to *jiwan-mukti* (corporeal salvation) than to *videh-mukti* (afterlife salvation) and to communal co-existence and peace, is the focus of this paper.

However, there lies some difference between the later Hinduism, greatly influenced by the Buddhist and Jain non-violence, and the creed of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Sikhism, while keeping deeply wedded to the philosophy of greatest altruism and humanism, eventually grew a strong tradition of armed struggle, beginning from the time of the martyrdom of the fifth Guru Arjan Dev. However, the Sikh martiality was not directed towards spread of its faith, like jihad in Islam, but for the protection of human rights. The Sikh tradition holds that the sixth Guru Hargobind had taken to wearing princely attire, and arms. He had started encouraging his followers to take to arms and had organised military training for them. It is also said that he had even raised a standing Sikh soldiery, taken to sitting on a throne, and had even raised some fortifications around Amritsar. This had introduced Sikhism to martialism that had culminated into the creation of Khalsa. But the Sikhs were conditioned by the teachings of *Guru Granth Sahib* to take to arms only for the protection of justice, beliefs and the meek. It was ordained by the tenth Guru Gobind Singh that, "When all means to get justice fail, it is righteous to lift the sword."

Yet Sikhism had continued to be the harbinger of peace and humanism between the two warring civilisations of Hinduism and Islam. During the century long sway of the Sikh confederacies (*misals*) in Punjab digging the grave of the Mughal Empire in north-western India, the peaceable Muslim laity and aristocracy continued to enjoy their protection. In the subsequent half-a-century-long rule of

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs co-existed in perfect peace and harmony. Despite having wrested his kingdom from the barbaric Mughals, who were fond of ordering group executions in public on the slightest pretext, he is not known to have ordered even a single execution. Yet he and his dauntless armies, mostly consisting of Khalsa Sikhs, had broken the back of the ferocious Afghans who had habitually invaded and plundered Punjab and India regularly over a millennia.

When the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak had appeared on the scene in the sixteenth century India, his land of birth was a land ravaged, plundered and humbled by almost five centuries of successive waves of Islamic invasions from the West by Afghans, Turks, Arabs and Mughals. The native Hindus, in whom he was born, were the subjugates of, and paid obeisance to, the Muslim ruling classes. They had become worse than second-class citizens, and their coercive conversions to Islam was a favourite pastime of the vanquishers. Demoralisation and resulting immorality was the fate of the Hindu society. The Rajput Ranas, the most valorous class of Hindus had been so thoroughly routed that to survive they had struck marital alliances with the Mughals and put their armies at the disposal of the Mughal Court to reap the benefits of serving as its Courtiers and Commanders. Most centres and fonts of Hindu religiosity, morality and spiritual guidance lay in ruins; charlatans had spread superstition, racialism and ritualism, further degrading and disgracing Hinduism in the eyes of Muslims, the elite of the day. Centuries long valiant efforts of Bhakti Movement to infuse new life into the downtrodden Hindu society were hardly bearing any fruit and had also been unable to bring peace between the two clashing communities and cultures.

The healer appeared in Guru Nanak who pronounced in his bani in raga Sri that, "He alone may claim to be a genuine Guru whose instinct for uniting people is unfailing." He rejected the contemporary ritualistic preaching of both the Hindu and Muslim clerics with equal force. The spiritual knowledge available around him left his divinely attuned mind totally unsatisfied, and he left his home and hearth in his prime, in search of truth. For almost a quarter century, till the age of fifty-two, Guru Nanak wandered from shrine to shrine, and sanctuary to sanctuary of all the known faiths and creeds of Indian

subcontinent and the accessible neighbouring lands. He went as far as Sri Lanka in the south, Assam in the east, Tibet in the north, and Saudi Arabia and Iraq in the west. He would unhesitatingly take up the garb, style and idiom of the people he came across to win their faith. "Embrace the positive qualities of others, leaving their negative ones", recommends Guru Nanak in his bani in raga Suhi. Thus, there would hardly be any major religion of his times having any concern with the Indian polity that Guru Nanak would not have sought to enquire into.

By the times of Guru Nanak, mankind all over the world was experiencing great revolutions in knowledge and civilisation. Mathematics, astronomy, alchemy, physics and geography had made great strides in Arabia under powerful and enlightened Muslim civilisations on the Middle Ages, which had in turn kindled the wave of Renaissance and Reformation in Europe. Copernicus, a European astronomer contemporary of Guru Nanak was challenging the erroneous belief of the Christian Church that the Earth was the centre of the whole universe, and Galileo was using the telescope to prove that there were other 'earths' besides our Earth. Printing press had been invented, and Luther and Calvin were striving to deliver a deathblow to superstition, bigotry and fundamentalism in the Roman Catholic Christianity. While Guru Nanak was wandering about in search and propagation of the truth, European seafaring adventurers like Columbus and Vasco da Gama were sailing around the world in search of India fabled as the "golden sparrow".

What wonder then that Guru Nanak's creed would be much more modern, enlightened, universal, and cosmopolitan than those born in the Old and Middle Ages. It could naturally avoid many a superstition and nescient pitfall of faiths of ancient and medieval times. Guru Nanak had strived primarily to establish an enlightened, egalitarian and humanistic society. He succeeded where others had failed in winning equal confidence of the two hostile communities by singing of universal brotherhood of mankind in a language and idiom acceptable to the both. When he was asked during hajj to Mecca whether he considered Muslims more pious than the Hindus, Guru Nanak had stated sagaciously that devoid of righteous conduct either of them would deserve equal contempt.

Guru Nanak's nine illustrious successors, till the tenth Guru

bestowed eternal guru-ship on Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh scripture, had carried on his mission faithfully. The next three Gurus had added prolifically to the pothi (book) of his hymns Guru Nanak had left in their care. Conforming hymns of many Bhakti Movement Bhaktas and Sufis were also included in it. The succeeding Gurus had also further evolved his practices of congregational kirtan and community langar into enduring institutions of integrating people of all castes, creeds and classes. When the great Mughal Emperor Akbar had, while run by the fourth Guru Ramdas crossing the river Beas at Goindwal on a visit to Lahore, seen the Guru-ka-Langar being by the third Guru Amar Das open to all without distinction, he was so impressed that he gifted a jagir of 500 bighas of land on which were later built a township of Ramdasapur which later grew into the holy city of Amritsar, and the Harmandir - the temple of the Supreme Being - now known as the Golden Temple also since after Maharaja Ranjit Singh got it gilded.

While founding Ramdasapur, Guru Ramdas had invited people of all callings, creeds and castes to settle there. When the fifth Guru Arjan had begun building the Harmandir, now famous the world over as the Golden Temple, he had invited the Muslim saint Mian Mir from Lahore to lay the foundation stone. Entrances were provided from all the four directions, a standard feature of all Sikh gurdwaras since then, symbolising open-armed welcome for all humanity without any distinction. And when Guru Arjan got compiled the first recension of the Sikh scripture for to be installed in the Harmandir, he included into it the conforming bani of about thirty Bhagtas and Sufis bards of different caste, classes and regions along with the bani of the Sikh Gurus.

Gurbani enshrined in the Sikh scripture, in the best Indian tradition of *ekam sad vipra bahuda vadanti* - that is, the Real is one but the wise describe Him variously - impressed upon both the feuding communities the futility of bickering over the exclusive validity of their respective faiths and exhorts them to follow the paths of their respective faiths faithfully because they all lead to the realisation of the same Singular Supreme Being, the Creator of all, whether you call him Allah or Parbraham. Said Guru Nanak in his bani in raga Gauri, "There may exist two parallel paths - the Hindu and the Muslim, but both converge on the same Lord." Third Guru Amardas goes a step

further when he prays in his bani in raga Bilawal, "Grant me redemption, O Lord, (if not through the door I have chosen), then through the door of your choice."

In his bani in raga Ramkali, Guru Arjan puts forward the same idea more clearly, "Let it be clear to one and all, that it is the Guru who removes the pall of falsehood and shows how Allah and Parbraham are the same". When a Sikh bows before their scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, he bows before their eternal Guru based upon not just the wisdom of their own living Gurus whose bani is enshrined in it, but also before the wisdom of thirty odd Hindu and Muslim Bhagtas and bards whose bani is also included therein. Some of these non-Sikh Bhagtas belonged to castes and classes considered lowly by the traditional Hinduism, and many Muslims too. But Sikhism considers all people as equal and equivalent. Such catholicity, equating the two conflicting communities was bound to sow the seed of peace between them.

Tuzak-i-Jahangiri, the autobiography of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir bears witness to the common appeal of Sikhism for the opposing communities while recording Guru Arjan's martyrdom on the narrow-minded orders of the Emperor Jahangir. It records, "At Goindwal on the banks of the river Beas, a Hindu named Arjan lived in the garb of a pir, whom many simple-minded Hindus and ignorant and lowly Muslims revered as their Guru. I had been pondering for quite sometime to either close this shop of falsehood active for three or four generations, or else to convert him to Islam. When the foolish prince Khusro went to see him, the Guru had put a tilak on his forehead. Therefore, I ordered him and his family to be arrested along with all property and dealt with according to the law of Yasa for treason." The Guru was thus barbarically tortured and killed simply because he was popular amongst both Hindus and Muslims and had not refused refuge to the fugitive prince fleeing for his life to Kabul.

The Emperor, however, had later relented on finding that he was mislead, and restored everything to the only son of the martyred Guru who became the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. In fact Chandu Lal, the Diwan of the Lahore province, who had deliberately reported wrong facts about the Guru and prince Khusro due to personal antagonism was also handed over to the sixth Guru for appropriate punishment. According

to some references the Guru had adorned princely attire and two swords, one representing Miri and the other the Piri, and sat on a throne, in the building in front of the Harmandir now called the Akal Takhat. The Emperor is reported to have later taken the Guru along on his way to visit to Kashmir. When the Emperor had travelled on, the Guru had traversed the 'Paradise on Earth' preaching his message.

It were probably these contacts, and the fact that many Rajput Ranas closely related to the Mughal Emperors were also devotees of the Sikh Gurus, which had encouraged a deputation of the Hindus of Kashmir to approach the ninth Guru Tegh Bahadur at Anandpur Sahib, a quarter of century later, for help in the face of a bloody campaign of the Governor of Kashmir to forcibly convert Kashmiri Hindus to Islam to appease the most bigoted and fanatic Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. When the Guru had gone to Delhi to intercede, the zealot Mughals would not listen to any arguments regarding the rights of all religions to exist together. Instead the Guru's execution was ordered when he had refused to convert to Islam despite the Emperor's persuasions.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's senseless and barbaric execution over the religious rights of the adherents of another faith was a unique example of altruism. His son, the tenth Guru Gobind Singh has said in his bani, the Bachittar Natak, "Nobody has ever equalled the act of Guru Tegh Bahadur; his uniqueness lies in his martyrdom in the defence of the Hindu's janeu and tilak." For this sacrifice, Guru Tegh Bahadur had earned the honorific of being Hind-di-Chadar, the veil of India's honour! A couple of years ago, a large number of displaced Kashmiri Pundits had gone in a procession from Chandigarh to Kesh Garh, Anandpur Sahib and had installed there a plaque marking their eternal gratefulness to him.

This altruistic legacy and creed of Sikhism to end all divisions and distinctions spreading peace and harmony amongst people of all castes, creeds and classes was taken to new heights by the tenth Guru Gobind Singh when he created the Khalsa, which has lent the present distinguishable form to the Sikhs. When he chose the Panj Piyare, the Five Beloved Ones of his new creed, with the blood-curling call of surrendering their lives to his blood dripping naked sword, all had belonged to different castes, creeds and corners of the country. Bhai

Daya Singh was a Punjabi Khatri, Bhai Dharam Singh a Jat from Hastinapur, Bhai Sahib Singh a Nai from Karnataka, Bhai Himmat Singh a Mehra from Orissa, and Bhai Mohkam Singh a Chhimba from Gujarat. He had baptised them with the 'baptismal water consecrated with the sword', and had got himself similarly baptised by them in turn, thus equating them with himself, a unique convention of "apey gur chela", that is, the Guru being himself the follower too. More than once in Sikh history, the Tenth Guru as well as the subsequent Sikh leaders, had to bow before the majority decision of the community following this tradition, which is honoured in Sikhism till today.

Thus Sikhism is very cosmopolitan and universal in essence and outlook and propagates the idea of one world and one humanity. No other religion has perhaps, shown this catholicity of outlook and faith in bringing together people of all castes, creeds and classes into its fold, and gospel of sages of diverse creeds into its scripture. No wonder, the people of all castes and creeds had lived in utmost peace and harmony under Sikh raj. The following proclamation of Guru Gobind Singh in his bani Akal Ustati states the essence of gurbani and Sikhism as a whole:

Let all know that they belong to one and the same caste,
 The temple and the mosque are the same,
 Hindu and Muslim worship is fundamentally the same,
 All mankind is one, though it appears variously,
 Geographical diversities alone create the differences,
 All humans are made similarly of similar elements,
 The God of Hindus and Muslims is the same,
 And same is the message of Hindu and Muslim scriptures.

Growth of such cosmopolitan thinking amongst the religions of the world alone can spread true humanism and harmony. Only such truly humanistic creed can become a Universal Religion. Thus humanism is a perfect candidate for being a secular universal religion for the simple reason that while it addresses itself completely to the good and welfare of man it totally ignores the mythical and superstitious domain of God, His creation and His worship. Since religion based on different concepts of the Divinity and His worship becomes the major cause of divisions and strife amongst the humanity, cult of humanism could, theoretically, be the ultimate panacea for

world peace and harmony. However, true humanism and Sikhism introduces an element of spirituality and morality in the bare concept of western humanism without imbibing weakness and servility. Rather it teaches and preaches to impart as well as to procure justice, and to live in self-respect, dignity and righteousness, ever-ready to fight and sacrifice for human rights and justice.

Although the Sikhs had become the first Indians after centuries to have succeeded in subduing the Afghans and Baluchs on the north-western frontier of India from further incursions into India, yet they did not persecute these vanquished ferocious Muslim races. Sikhism just does not preach division and persecution of people and communities on the basis of races, creeds, classes and castes. The message of *Guru Granth Sahib* preaches that all humanity is the children of the same Singular Supreme Being and thus belongs to a common brotherhood, laying the foundation of mutual peace and harmony. Thus *Guru Granth Sahib* is a unique font of humanism and its gospel ought to be spread the world over to achieve these most vital aims for the survival and perpetuity of human kind.

References

1. Wazir Singh, *Humanism of Guru Nanak*, Ess Ess Publications, Delhi, 1977, p. xii.
2. "Buddhism is humanistic since it believes in the ability of the individual to achieve ethical goals in this world without nonhuman aid." - Dale Riepe, *Naturalistic Tradition in Indian Thought*, 1961, Ch. 7.
3. "The bhaktas ... preached equality, faith and love, in contrast with scepticism and egotism. ... What binds them together is the nobility of the motive and the supreme effort in promotion of an ethical humanism." - Wazir Singh, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.
4. *Dasam Granth*, *Zafarnamah*, 22.
5. Carved in India wrested from the Afghan Sultanate by Babur of Mongolian ancestry whose forefathers had seized the reign of Afghanistan and converted to Islam to avoid sending tribute back home.
6. *Guru Granth*, p. 72.
7. *Ibid.*, p.766.
8. Bhai Gurdas, *Var* 1:32.
9. Congregational hymn singing open to people of all hues.
10. Free messing for all, sitting together on the same ground.

11. The Mughals were actually Mongols and were not initially very enthusiastic Muslims. Akbar, who had struck marital relations with Rajput Ranas in India, had actually tried to propagate Din-I-Illahi, a common persuasion of his own, borrowing much from Hinduism and Christianity, besides Islam.
12. *Guru Granth*, p. 233.
13. *Ibid.*, p.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 897.
15. The Tenth, and final living Guru Gobind Singh, had before passing away not long after having lost all the four of his sons at the hands of treacherous Mughal expeditionary force, bestowed eternal Guruship upon the Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*.
16. The barbaric Mongolian code providing for very severe and torturous punishments for even common offences.
17. Pertaining to a Mir or Amir - a ruler.
18. Pertaining to a Pir - a sage.
19. Of course, this would have been impossible without some sort of approval or condescendence of the Mughal authorities because Amritsar was too close to the Mughal Provincial capital of Lahore. Therefore, there could be some substance in the references that Emperor Jahangir had allowed the Guru to raise an armed force for his protection on the usual pattern of mansabdaris granted to chiefs and sirdars in-general under the Administrative system of the Mughal Empire.
Bhai Santokh Singh, Suraj Parkash, pp.
20. The Throne of the Timeless, that is the eternal Supreme Being or God.
21. *Dasam Granth*, Bachittar Natak, 215/13.
22. The community of Sikhs totally dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh, who could even lay their lives at his bidding unhesitatingly.
23. *Dasam Granth*, Akal Ustati, p. 86.

***Guru Granth Sahib* and The Theme of Cultural Diversity**

N. Muthu Mohan

Introduction:

Cultural diversity is a fact as old as humanity. It is impossible to imagine a period in human history when the contingencies of humankind were without their cultural identities. In a sense, humanity was striving all the time in its history to bring "order" into the "chaos" of multiplicity. Religions played an important role in these historical strivings for unity. There were so many successful, often violent, attempts to achieve the desired order. In recent times there is increasing literature on the theme of cultural multiplicity and the ways on how to live with the plurality of cultures. In the year 1995, the UNESCO brought out the Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development with the title "Our Creative Diversity". "For groups and societies, culture is energy, inspiration and empowerment, as well as the knowledge and acknowledgement of diversity: if cultural diversity is "behind us, around us and before us" as Claude Levi-Strauss put it, we must learn to let it lead not to the clash of cultures, but to their fruitful coexistence and to intercultural harmony" says the President of the Commission Javier Perez de Cueller. The fact of cultural diversity compels the religionists, culturologists, anthropologists and philosophers to revisit the past and work out appropriate models of multicultural living. The present paper is an attempt to read *Guru Granth Sahib*, the Scripture of the Sikhs, from the point of view of how it takes cognizance of the fact of religious and cultural multiplicity in and around the Indian subcontinent and to probe into the ways *Guru Granth Sahib* offers to meet the problem.

Indian Experience of Cultural Multiplicity:

Sometimes it seems that the known history of India from the

most ancient days was struggling hard around the problem of one and many. In Indian philosophical terminology, it is the problem of *Ekantavada* and *Anekantavada*, the first serious philosophical debate in ancient India. The *Ekantavada* in its vocal Vedic-Vedantic proposal, it seems, had an acute fear and contempt towards multiplicity and ended in announcing the illusion of plurality. At times, the *Ekantavada* suggested that a unity was possible only beyond the empirical reality.

Anekantavada was very much aware of the multiplicity and projected itself as the philosophical defender of plurality in ancient India. Jainism represented this point of view. It found justification in the substantiality of each and every identity (*Monad*). At the wake of violence implied in the Ekanta position, it proposed non-violent relations (*Ahimsa*) among the cultural groups.

Without going into all the details of the debate, we can conclude that the debate ended in formulating the varna-caste model, a hierarchical and stagial system with rigid cultural barriers. During the medieval Bhakti movements of India, the wave of multiplicity again asserted itself, however, another wave of ordering them too got executed. The Bhakti failed to replace the caste-hierarchic system although it had sincere attempts and yielded before and synthesized with the later.

It is towards the late medieval period we locate Sikhism as the third stream of thought that attempts to deal with the problem of one and many afresh.

The Sikh Experience of Diversity and Structure of *Guru Granth Sahib* :

One is astounded by the immensity of cultural diversity that comes across *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. From this point of view, the *Guru Granth Sahib* has to be located in a wonderful multicultural, multi-linguistic and multi-religious episteme. It is interesting to take note of what the Sikh tradition informs us about the first revelation of Guru Nanak Dev. It was on the inter-religious theme namely, "There is no Hindu, There is no Musalman" implying that there is only one humanity, that the Hindu and Islamic are only culturally diversified ways of perceiving the one True God. Similarly the Sikh biographers tell us that towards the end of Guru Nanak's mortal life, the Hindus

and the Muslims gathered around the Guru, desiring to execute the last rites of the Guru each in their own way. As we know, the Guru was celebrated during his life as the Guru of the Hindus and the Pir of the Muslims.

Geographically, Punjab is situated as the mid-land between the Arabio-Persian world and the Hindu world. Punjab, possibly, underwent the thickest experiences of Hindu-Muslim encounters during the 10-17 centuries than any other part of India. This had left a challenging and dynamic impression upon the people and history of Punjab. At the micro-level, the Hindu-Muslim meet landed upon the religious, linguistic and socio-political structures of Punjab. In the interior parts of India, some might have cherished the idea of extending the classical Hindu model of hierarchical ordering to the Muslims too. But Punjab, it seems, did not have such unrealizable and historically regressive ambitions. It opted a different mode. *Guru Granth Sahib* tells us that the Sikh Gurus went to the extent of dismantling the hierarchical ordering of the Hindu system and ending the cultural colonialism that was lying at the bottom of the caste order. The Gurus consciously broadened their experience of cultural diversity that might have been first suggested by the Hindu-Muslim encounters at Punjab.

This background informs us about the structure of *Guru Granth Sahib* that forms the episteme or the general framework in which the Sikh thought starts emerging. It contains a very deep understanding of the cultural diversity unknown in Indian history to any other thought system. It is also a re-cognition of cultural diversity as a dynamic source of working out alternative ways of living. The *Udasis* (travels) undertaken by Guru Nanak Dev towards the four directions of the then known world come closer to explain the meaning of the structure of *Guru Granth Sahib*. *Udasi* temporarily dismisses the immediate givenness of one's own life and its everydayness, and enters into an experimental realm to reach out new cultural horizons.

The Guru undertook four *udasis* and he met with varied forms of life during his travels. He met the Siddhas in the Himalayas and his idea of unity of spiritual and temporal (*Miri-Piri*) gets formulated then. The unity of *bhakti* and inner purity too emerged out of his meetings with the Nath yogis. Priority to ethical behavior replacing the ritualism of religions becomes an important aspect of the Guru's

thought. Guru Nanak went to the Ganges and his critique of Brahmanic rituals found a wonderful confirmation there. Guru Nanak visited Puri and there we find his celebration of nature as a real form of worshipping God. *Babar Vani* informs us the Guru's critique of any authoritarian form of ruling. The episode of Malik Bhago tells us about Guru's concern on and partisanship with the poor. Guru Nanak's travel to the Arabian lands informs us about his critique of Islamic externalism. These are only a few to quote. During the *Udasis*, the Guru encounters so many languages, cultures, religions, tribes and landscapes. The Guru met the Siddhas, Sufis, Sants, Vaishnavite and Saivite Bhaktas, Brahmanic pundits and innumerable common people of various hues. Every encounter contains an interesting episode of life-situation. It is a great panorama of life. The Guru learns and teaches during the *Udasis*.

The compositional pattern and contents of *Guru Granth Sahib* somehow reflect the essential moments of the *Udasis* (travel) and the religious experiences that emerge out of them. The *Guru Granth Sahib* is authored not only by the Sikh Gurus, but also by the Hindu Bhagats and Sufi saints. The authorial pattern is profoundly symptomatic. It recognizes the widely varied historical attempts of perceiving the incomprehensible God. The linguistic plane of *Guru Granth Sahib* represents the synthesis of Arabio-Persian and Sanskrit language groups. *Guru Granth Sahib* registers not only the socio-cultural diversity but also the natural variety, seasonal multiplicity and wonders of lands and colors in God's creation.

***Guru Granth Sahib*-Dealing the Cultural Diversity:**

Our thesis of cultural diversity forming the structure of *Guru Granth Sahib* does not mean that cultural diversity is found as a raw fact in the Sikh scripture. *Guru Granth Sahib* goes further. The sensibility of cultural diversity is added by the theoretical work accomplished in *Guru Granth Sahib*. The Sikh religiosity available in *Guru Granth Sahib* is the ultimate outcome of the transcendence of the cultural diversity registered in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Thus the structure of *Guru Granth Sahib* about which we spoke above is not mere factuality of diversity and it includes the way of how *Guru Granth Sahib* deals with that fact.

India has the historical experience of dealing with the multiplicity. One of its very prominent models is ordering them in a hierarchy. Hierarchical ordering is a type of internal colonization. *Guru Granth Sahib* does not subscribe to this model. As we mentioned earlier, the Sikh Gurus worked for dismantling the hierarchical pattern. *Guru Granth Sahib* thinks of alternative ways of dealing the plurality of existence.

The Sikh concept of unity of spirituality and temporality (*Miri-Piri*) contains two important aspects in this regard. The first is the celebration of multiplicity as the wonder of the creation of God. In the Sikh scheme of things, the created world is true and holy in all its varieties. In *Japuji Sahib* and *Asa Di Var*, the variety of created world is celebrated abundantly. The second aspect of the principle of *Miri-Piri* is that the multiplicity of nature and temporal life is stubbornly tied up with the spirituality to which Sikhism stands for. Let us remind here that the Sikh spirituality is not a type of religiosity that is aimed at the mere transcendental. It infuses into the diversity of temporal reality values such as justice, dynamism, self-dignity, resistance to colonization and ego-less-ness. This is the fundamental methodological principle that informs us how *Guru Granth Sahib* deals with the cultural diversity.

Historically many monistic philosophies miserably failed in their dealings with cultural multiplicity. This was true about monotheisms too. *Guru Granth Sahib* as well offers a monotheistic philosophy. How does the monotheism of *Guru Granth Sahib* deal with the diversity? It is an interesting problem. Monotheism of *Guru Granth Sahib* is not the mere statement of oneness of God. God is one, nameless, formless and human attempts cannot comprehend the attributes of God. The idea of incomprehensibility of God despite the innumerable attempts of humans is an interesting theme in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Some are fortunate and some are not, and we do not understand the ways of God why it is so. The infiniteness of attributes of God and the incomprehensibility of God make the monotheism of *Guru Granth Sahib* a different one. *Guru Granth Sahib* sees God as abundance, richness, inestimable, unpredictable and immeasurable. I remind here the concept of God held by the German philosopher Leibniz as infinite and the Leibnizean rationalism that gives a lot of

space for contingency and monadology. A similar position, although not identical, we observe in the monotheism of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Thus Sikhism is a monotheistic thought but not a colonizing monotheism. It does not dismiss the reality of multiplicity. It does not name the diversity as illusion. It does not call it full of suffering. Neither it evaluates life as sinful. The wonderful variety of life is a garden, a gift, a game of love, an alive tall green tree that ever blossoms, a *daramsala*, an ocean of God where we all play as fishes. It is a wonder and a celebration of wonder. The monotheism of *Guru Granth Sahib* is indeed different from many of its type. I feel that the sensibility of cultural diversity and its dynamism have left their imprint in the monotheism of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Guru Granth Sahib renders immense priority to ethics and it is one important way of dealing with the fact of multiplicity. Multiplicity not to turn into chaos needs an ethical entry. The ethics here again is not the ethics of hierarchy or not the ethics of enslaved minds (Nietzsche) but the ethics of justice, esteem and dignity. *Guru Granth Sahib* calls the Hindus to be true Hindus and Muslims to be true Muslims. It gives priority to internal purity and truthfulness than rituals and externalities. It postulates the fundamental equality of every one, male and female. It invokes the guts to challenge the sacredness of a text that preaches born inequality among people. Ethics is a fluid territory that does not limit itself with rigidities. On the other hand it keeps itself open to negotiations as and when varied situations arise. The ethical awareness and consciousness of justice while dealing are the most important things here. Ethics is the realm where the spiritual and the temporal confluence. It is the standpoint of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

Guru Granth Sahib is another type of ordering the multiplicity, non-colonizing and non-hierarchical. The musical-emotive form of *Gurbani* exemplifies this fact. The musical-poetic articulation of *Gurbani* means the aesthetic way of comprehending the God. Let us understand that the aesthetical is not a purely transcendental way of expression. The aesthetical always involves the temporal. In the Upanishads, the elongated and undifferentiated base sound of *Oum* was taken as the model for the *Nirguna Brahman*, where the *gunas* and differentiated noises were understood as chaos and *maya*. *Gurbani* is the exploration of a midway between the undifferentiated *Oum* and the

differentiated noises. *Gurbani* is music and *ragas* that bring order into words and emotions. Words and emotions may mean temporal and existential problems. *Oum* is impotent to address the worldly problems. It may offer psychological appeasement or make you go beyond the world. *Oum* dismisses multiplicity and diversity. *Gurbani* and *Guru-ragas* meet the temporal problems without shifting you to the symbolic realm. It is another way of ordering the multiplicity. *Gurbani* is the idiom of *Miri-Piri*, the unity of the temporal and the spiritual.

Conclusion:

Guru Granth Sahib may be the first scripture in Indian history that contains a deep awareness about the cultural diversity of the subcontinent. It distinguishes itself by differing from the hierarchizing and colonizing ways of dealing with the multiplicity. It refuses to order people and things according to their self-assumed status or authority. *Guru Granth Sahib* is another way of ordering things in terms of justice, equality and self-respect. The priority to ethics and aesthetics rendered by *Guru Granth Sahib* exemplifies this fact.

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Universal Concerns in the *Guru Granth Sahib*

Jasbir Singh Sabar

In the 20th century science has made tremendous advancement and brought out marvellous inventions to make the human life, physically much comfortable. Still numerous atomic reactors, thermal plants, race for armaments, nuclear weapons, greed of wealth, selfishness, ego, terror etc. could in no way eliminate or dispel the inner darkness from the minds of mankind and make people tranquil and contented. The whole mankind is confused, unable to find out the relevant solution of the problems as the love, equality and peace have been thrown out of the doors of humanity, the more one endeavours to get out of the doors of humanity, the more one endeavours to get out of this situation, the more one gets entangled in its web. In fact 20th century has given only tension and restlessness. Most of the psychologists have blamed man's unending desire for more and more materialistic gains as the sole reason for this. Mental peace and spiritual solace has become the need of every individual in the world so that the atmosphere of harmony could be created for the whole mankind.

In the light of above, I do not find any exaggeration in saying that whatever may be the religious faith of an individual today or in future ages to come, he/she is required to study thoroughly the *Bani of Guru Granth Sahib* to find out the solution of his/her problems.

Hard work, honesty, righteous means to lead the life, sharing the fruit of earning with the needy and service to mankind without any distinction of caste, creed and colour are the basic universal concerns discussed and depicted in *Guru Granth Sahib*. In fact all the concepts of *Guru Granth Sahib* are dedicated to whole mankind and not to a particular section of the society of any country, believing each being to be the spiritual manifestation of the Absolute. Actually, it was immense greatness of Guru Arjan Dev the fifth Guru of the Sikhs that

he, through his excellent editorial endeavours gave in 1604 AD to the suffering humanity, for its overall betterment and welfare, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the Eternal Guru of the mankind and a Divine blessing from the God. This scripture was originally named the *Adi Granth* in which Guru Arjan Dev included the *Bani* of the first five Sikh Gurus, as well as of 15 *Bhagtas*, 11 *Bhats* and 4 other devotees of the Gurus. Later on Guru Gobind Singh added to it the hymns of his father Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru of the Sikhs thus taking the number of Sikh Gurus to six. All these contributors were ardent lovers of God, originally belonging to different religions, regions, castes and classes. Guru Gobind Singh bestowed the status of Guru to this scripture the *Adi Granth* at Nanded in 1708 AD and after that closed the tradition of having Guru in physical frame for the Sikh Panth. The entire revealed corpus of 5872 hymns of 36 contributors is meticulously arranged in 1430 pages and in 31 primary and 34 sub ragas of different musical measures.

Thus the basic contents of the *Guru Granth Sahib* are not the ownership of any particular community religion as Guru Arjan Dev says in one of his *shabad* that the *Guru Granth Sahib* is like contentment (*santokh*) and dialogue (*vichar*) which are the basis for the upliftment of the entire mankind. Thus the universal message and all inclusiveness of the *Guru Granth Sahib* are not bound by the barriers of regions and religions and are infact, the eternal guide for all human beings for all the times. That is why Guru Amar Das also prays in his *Bani* to almighty God to save the burning world through any doorway :

O God, save by thy grace the world in flames,
save it at whatever portal it may be saved.¹

Today the position at global level is very much alarming. Two-thirds of humanity goes to bed hungry; the big nations of the world are spending millions of dollars on war and armament every year; thousand million dollars are wasted on cosmetics in a day. Unwanted millions of dollars are being spent on terrorist acts to destabilise the peace of under developed countries. Disarmament, Peace and Just Relations among Nations are such global questions which are only discussed without findings any solution. But *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* says clearly that no civilised administration set-up worth its

name, has any right to continue if it does not practise justice.²

Thus the 36 contributors of *Guru Granth Sahib* though belong to different social and religious denominations, different social backgrounds and different linguistic groups yet they were to be together in *Guru Granth Sahib*. This role model has provided guidelines to understand the universal concerns related to whole mankind and to find out the solution to establish peace and harmony here, there and everywhere.

In order to create a channel for the transformation of an animal being into a divine being, means for bringing out real culturalisation of the society have been laid down in the form of the following five principles. Infact these five principals are those which are perceived in the modern terms as human rights. No doubt, the concept of human rights in modern terms and is a recent one, but *Guru Granth Sahib* has laid down the founding principles even in 16th century which are so as follows :

1. Saith Nanak : snatching other's possession is like eating flesh of pig for one (Muslim) and flesh of cow for the others (Hindu).
2. If we have to live at the cost of our dignity, everything that we eat becomes ill-gotten (*haraam*).
3. One who eats his earning by hard labour and distributes the surplus among the needy, says Nanak :
Is only the one who understands the real way to emancipation.
4. Neither there is a foe, nor a foreigner, we are friendly with every one.
5. One should neither frighten someone nor should be afraid of anyone.

In this way the *banikars* of *Guru Granth Sahib* keep in their mind the totality of life and universality of the fundamental principles in order to bring out really a new smooth social order. Through these principles one happily repudiates the lifestyle which awakens the individual to respond to the sense of necessity of social responsibility. In this way anyone whosoever important is urged to submit his/her total self for the welfare of every member of the society. *Gurbani* considers it crime to crave for someone else's rights. It is a religiously condemnable act for every member of every section. Though this menace of grabbing of others' belongings is much more prevalent in

almost every society all over the world today. *Gurbani* also advocates to eliminate the fear from individual's mind. Unfortunately, we all continuously live under fear of something or the other, so much so that sometimes we fear in our dreams as well. War, terrorist acts, dacoity, theft etc. have created constant fear psychosis. Unfortunately, this vital issue remains unresolved in every form of Government. *Gurbani* perceives a society as *begumpura* in which fear is eliminated from an individual's mind as well as the society in order to create such an atmosphere as is depicted in the words of Bhagat Ravidas as under :

There all are equal, none second or third
 It is a populous and famous city.
 The citizens are wealthy, and they move
 As freely through the city as they please;
 No high officials of the palace impedes them.⁸

Gurbani also emphasises of mutual respect leading to mutual bonds. The denial of this link actually has created social tensions all over the world. In fact nature has bound everyone with each other. The instinct of enmity is a foreign element invited by man himself to create a number of barriers between one and other which *Gurbani* does not approve as 'Neither there is a foe, nor a foreigner.'⁹

Gurbani pleads for the right of honour and dignified living for everyone including poor and downtrodden (*shudras*). Thus, the dignified and honourable living is the fundamental right of everyone. A slightest change in this status brought in by force, will disturb the whole equilibrium of social order and in the vital perspective the whole cosmic order. Therefore *Gurbani* has laid down the principle to live honourably and to let others live in the way they like with full honours and dignity.

The most alarming universal concern today is that the man for his vested interests including political, economic and cultural has tried to divide society into many sections. Today we find the society divided into races, religions, castes, colours and gender polarities etc. It has further been divided by the demarcation of the boundaries on political lines dividing humanity into fragments and further multiple boundaries have been created to perpetuate this division eternally. In this process an individual is not being recognized by his being but by his birth, social, economic or political status. This process has turned a large

section of the society into a deprived society resulting in a number of social, economic and political problems. The creators of such division had forgotten that the principle of division is against the law of nature and the cry of an individual has the capacity to disturb the whole cosmic order :

If I weep the whole world weeps
Even the trees and birds weep.¹⁰

Gurbani does not approve of such tendencies. It pleads and believes in oneness of God and oneness of man including woman. Guru Sahib while projecting the dignity of woman believes that it is the woman who provides the correct council to her husband, family members and also provides right leadership to the society. Guru Arjan Dev Ji says :

In whole of the family she is the most venerable.
She guides her younger brother-in-law and elder
brother-in-law.¹¹

In *Guru Granth Sahib* all the *banikars* have laid emphasis on truthful living, purity of mind, justice, equality, liberty, love, mercifulness, generosity, tolerance, humility, rejection of war and violence, condemnation of the use of drugs and intoxicants. etc. Even Guru Arjan Dev Ji suggests solution to the alarming universal problems by saying that in cases of disputes and differences of opinions, conflicting parties should sit together and settle their differences amicably after seeking Divine guidance.¹²

Besides these, *Gurbani* rejects the tendency of adultery which has created the diseases like AIDS. Dogmatism and rigidness do not find any place in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Any type of division on the basis of religion, caste, class and colour have been disapproved. Everyone is fully entitled to all rights and freedom without distinction of any kind. Article 2 of the U.N.O. also have the same guidelines. Human rights, equality, social justice, religious freedom, cultural freedom, social security, brotherhood etc. are discussed time and again by all *banikars* of *Guru Granth Sahib* for the upliftment of the mankind.

It is a hard fact that today we are living in such a world which is completely fragmented, morally as well as physically. The humanity has lost its base. This fragmentation has joined hands with crime and violence, particularly against poor and women. This is a great

challenge for the survival of humanity. From the maladies like social disturbance, nuclear disaster, increasing population, ill-planning, imbalance of property, inequality and increasing lust for 3 Ws, need to be checked for creating a universally acceptable moral discipline. For this spiritual ground, moral perspective to the humanity required to be provided for its growth in the right direction. One may be full of hopes from the *Guru Granth Sahib* and I feel none will go disappointed if he or she goes through its spiritual message objectively.

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Ecological concerns in *Guru Granth Sahib* : A Philosophical Analysis

Shashi Bala

Ecology is the study of the interrelations of the living organisms and their environment. The term 'ecology' is derived from the two Greek words 'oikos' meaning 'home' and 'logos' meaning 'understanding'.¹ Originally, ecology originated in biology but it has developed as a general philosophy of human life and has got diversified into different branches such as eco-philosophy, eco-theology, eco-spirituality and eco-ethics. Ecology is, indeed, an art and science of looking things as a whole. Every man is related by invisible bonds to every other fellow-being, to every other creature in the living realms and even to the non-living aspects of the universe. This invisible web of interconnections is the basis of ecology.

The aim of the present paper is to study and to highlight, first, the meaning and philosophical implications of ecology; second, the main ecological premises in the *Guru Granth Sahib* and third, the causes of ecological imbalances and the strategies to be adopted.

The word 'Ecology' is of recent coinage having been first proposed by nineteenth century German biologist Ernst Hackel who defined ecology as 'the domestic side of organic life'.² There are many other great men of biological renaissance who had contributed to the subject though the label 'ecology' was not in use. Hippocrates published a paper entitled 'On Air, water and Places'. Aristotle studied the habits of animals and their environmental conditions. Theophrastus may be regarded as the first ecologist in history. From the late seventeenth century through the nineteenth century, there are five major fields which had laid the foundation for the development of ecology as an independent scientific discipline in the twentieth century. These fields are: Natural history and faunal exploration; Environmental physiology and responses; Evolution and natural

selection; Population studies and demography; and Ecological geography and conservation.³

Ecology is a vast and encyclopedic subject and it includes in its scope the life habits of over a million different kinds of animals and plants and it considers the varied type of manners of influences and interactions among them.⁴ Ecology can also be defined as the study of ecosystems or the interrelations of the biotic communities with their non-living environments. Life and environment are interdependent. If there were no life on earth, its environment would have been different. Conversely, if the environment has not changed, the earth would have been devoid of many animals and plant species which inhabit it now. However, the message of ecology, like philosophy, is one of synthesis. It takes a broader view of life and seeks to integrate knowledge about man and his environment from the different perspectives.

Man is part and parcel of his environment. Environment affects all aspects of human life viz., physical, biological, social and cultural. Man's encounter with the world takes place in three ways. First is the astronomical world which consists of celestial bodies in the galaxy and outside; second is the geographical world which consists of his town or country. Both these world are cosmocentric and their increase or decrease depends on man's power to conceive, theories and perceive. Third is the anthropocentric world which is exemplified by man's culture and civilization. The geographical or astronomical world does not increase or decrease as is expressed by the law of physics that the quantum of matter or energy in the universe remains constant. What really changes is the meaning of things that exist in the natural world. For instance, a log of wood or a chair has different meaning for a beast, an uncivilized man and a civilized man. The meaning or purpose of all such things become more important on account of the relationship that man has with these things.⁵

Nonetheless, man's attitude towards his environment is also affected by different economic systems and religious philosophies. As the primitive man's attitude towards his environment was shaded by reverence, awe and fear i.e. fear of storms, disease, wild animals, earthquakes, celestial phenomena and countless other events which were beyond comprehension. The agriculture based economy-modified man's attitude and the stress was on improving the natural sources to

make them more useful for man. They never thought of clearing the haphazard growth of natural flora and fauna unless they had the alternative to produce there something as a gift of nature. The capitalist economy thinks of exploitation of nature without returning its due to it.

The different religious and philosophic thoughts also affect man's attitude towards his environment. As the Judaic-Christian philosophy regards nature as an instrument to serve man's needs. It is clearly stated in Genesis 1:28. "And God blessed them and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'" This aspect is the philosophical basis for the complete exploitation of land for the benefit of man.

On the contrary, the Indian tradition is based on the pantheistic and monistic idealism. It considers nature as the manifestation of God and believes in the sanctification of all living and non-living beings. Nature has intrinsic value and so reverence for all life is the basic postulate of the Indian philosophy. The Vedas regard gods, man and nature as one organic whole. Being stupefied by the wondrous and mighty powers of nature, they worshipped and praised these powers in humility as manifestations of the Absolute Being. This inseparable bond of unity between nature and man was due to the impact of their religious philosophy.

However, this type of affinity and interdependence among gods, men, animals, birds, plants and trees is found in the period of Epics and Puranas. The personification and reverence of the natural phenomena such as mountain Himalaya and river Ganga are explicit instances to project their significance to the life of man and society. The Ramayana also depicts an intimate type of relationship between human beings, animals, birds, fauna and flora. The Indian tradition of considering cow as mother and utilizing the cow-dung for various purposes is an example of ecological tradition. For centuries, there was co-existence between nature and living creatures. Man and nature form each other's environment. Man with friendly and harmonious relationship must unegoistically understand this fact.

Speaking of ecological concerns in *Guru Granth Sahib* from the Sikh perspective, there are some important general premises, which

should be kept in mind:

In the *Guru Granth Sahib*, there is One Ultimate Reality. Spirit and matter are creation of the One God. God is the Creator (Karta), sole Cause (Karn-Karan) Who creates by His Hukam or Divine Will. He has not only created the universe but has also arranged everything in a systematic and coherent way. Combining water and air, God has infused life in the human body, has made sun and moon as the great lamps and created earth as a place to live and die.⁶ The non-living and the living beings are all strung in the one string. None seems separate from the other in the whole cosmos. As the sea-waves, foam and bubbles are not separate from the sea, similarly no one seems separate from God, Who is in the innerself of everything and pervades and fills one and all.⁷ Not only the mountains, seas, deserts, plains, forests, fruits, caves of earth, underworld and skies⁸ but also the egg-born, foetus-born, sweat-born and earth-born⁹ are the creation of One God. The variant forms of creation like beads are woven in one thread and the creator, controller and holder of this thread is One God.

The *Guru Granth Sahib* does not believe in the pantheistic philosophy which stresses on the complete identification of nature and God. Nevertheless, nature is portrayed as the manifestation of One God. There is a feeling of reverence for nature and a hint of sanctification of all natural phenomena in the Sikh religion. But nature has no independent entity because this wonderful play of nature is working within God's Will.¹⁰ God alone knows the limits and extent of all living and non-living phenomena.¹¹ All the eco-systems are bound by the principle of eco-spirituality. God takes care of all, as the herdsman tends the cows.¹² In the divine scheme, provision is made to provide food and sustenance to all creatures, whether born in water¹³ or in the stone.¹⁴

The whole universe, according to ecological principles, is one living organism. Matter or non-living as well as living beings do not remain exclusive of each other but together constitute one existence. The five physical elements are directly or indirectly concerned in the generation of plant life which through photosynthetic activity transforms sun's energy into chlorophyll which becomes food for the other living creatures. However, there is an intricate interdependence of various factors in the universe which point out to the unity of life

and existence as a whole. The human body is also made up of five elements i.e. earth, water, fire, air, ether and these five elements are manifestation of God.¹⁵ During the life-time, this body is sustained by the vital breath (prana) and at the end, it will be consigned to fire.¹⁶

Man, no doubt, is bestowed with status higher to all living species, but he is an integral part of this cosmos and is intimately related to all the inhabitants of this earth in an unbreakable and inseparable existential bond and is moving towards a common destiny. Generally, it is believed that the human life has come after passing through innumerable living species. This fact is unanimously taken for granted in the Indian philosophical and religious thought. The number of eighty-four lakhs of existences, which neither increase nor decrease, is acknowledged in *Guru Granth Sahib*.¹⁷ Before assuming this human form, man has gone through the forms of numerous species such as trees, plants, animals, serpents, birds etc.¹⁸ A similar expression is found elsewhere and these innumerable forms of species such as insects, worms, elephants, fish, deer, snakes, birds and trees etc are mentioned.¹⁹

In this process of the evolution of soul of man, Dr Sher Singh finds 'a little psychogenetic approach to the idea' and an 'implicit reference to the psychical inheritance of character from one species to another.'²⁰ Again it is clearly mentioned in the holy scripture that if man goes astray, he will have to pass through the chain of births and deaths.²¹

The *Guru Granth Sahib* inculcates an holistic attitude to life and nature, which, indeed, is a cardinal principle of ecology. Every life in whatever form it may exist, is a mystery and therefore, is eternal changeless and pure self, caused and conditioned by the invariable law of Karma. A reverential attitude and an inner urge to safeguard the autonomy of life are essential elements of the inner dynamics of *Guru Granth Sahib*.

The equilibrium of eco-systems is found in many compositions of *Guru Granth Sahib*, in which manifestation of nature in all its cosmic and humanistic aspects is portrayed. These also indicate to the heights of creative human sensibility and intuitive perception of cosmic beauty. The outward natural phenomena is revealing symbol of God. The immanent aspect of God can be visualized in cosmos.²² A divine

ecstatic perception of cosmic beauty is vividly portrayed in Sohila Arti, where the co-relation of eco-systems is defined in a mystic vision of divine prayer to the Almighty. Here the firmament is mentioned as salver, sun and moon as lamps, galaxy of stars as pearls, woods of sandal as incense, breezes blowing as royal fan, flowers and forests as offerings, unstruck music as sound of temple drums.²³

In Baramah Tukhari, the vicissitudes of soul's yearning for union with God are portrayed with the change of seasons. Nature attracts and inspires man at all levels of consciousness. The birds, forests, flower and the rhythmic changes of nature are all taken together to depict man's feelings of inner disharmony and his urge to attain harmony. The cry of love of Chatrik, sweet melody of Koel, pleasing humming-bees and forest trees in blossom-are the pleasurable moments and the fulfilled man is more sensitive to these delights of nature. The sorrows and hardships of life due to demerits are compared to the scorching heat of asadh month.²⁴ A similar description of rhythmic change of seasons affecting not only the fauna and flora but also affecting man's moods is explicated in Rag Ramkali.²⁵

Another ecological aspect indicates to the inherent design that pervades the whole existence with earthly life at its centre. The ecological study is essentially geocentric because of its primary interest in the terrestrial life. Man tries to follow the order which is inherent in nature. Nature cannot be dubbed as unconscious, insentient or unintelligent. This ecological principle is clearly expressed in *Guru Granth Sahib*. The whole universe is a rational order, systematically arranged and having a specific plan and purpose. The state before the creation of the universe is described as *dhundhukara* (indescribable darkness), and the whole wide expanse was created with one utterance²⁶ due to God's desire (*bhana*).²⁷ In the process of creation, air came first, then water and from water came earth or the three worlds.²⁸ God Himself is the creator of earth and water and by His will the earth is girdled by the waters and the fire is locked in the wood. Similarly, the lion and goat live together in a forest because the indwelling spirit of God is pervading in all beings and all work in Divine Will.²⁹

However, human life and nature are taken together as part of a single continuum. The five elements are often sanctified and termed

as gurmukh. In Japuji Sahib, air is portrayed as Guru, water as father and earth as the great mother or source of nourishment of all living beings.³¹ The earth is also taken as a dharamsal, a place where man comes to practice righteousness.³² There is a growing world-wide consciousness that earth itself is a living organism or an enormous being of which we are parts.

To visualize a harmonious relationship not only in the biosphere but also in the entire cosmos, is another aspect of ecology. All ethos begins with the inevitable perception of unity in diversity. Unless we perceive this unity, there can be no concrete basis for the sublime feelings of wonder, love, devotion, worship, compassion, charity and so on. There are numerous expressions in *Guru Granth Sahib*, pointing out man's complete identification with nature with the intention to meet God in an ecstatic union with nature.³³ Man and nature are equal partners in the building of culture. In search for harmony with nature, man is indeed, in search of his own innerself. The non-living or inanimate world that environs living beings is bliss yielding. A unifying vision of cosmic existence indicates that each element in the cosmos has its own inherent worth and it exists in itself as also for others. Hence a considerable closeness exists between human beings, the natural world and transcendent reality.

The relationship between man and his environment is more explicit in certain instances where man is reminded of his ultimate destiny through numerous allusions of natural phenomena. For instance, the significance of Guru is portrayed with the analogy of a tree of gold, which has leaves of corals, flowers of diamond and pearls and fruit of rubies.³⁴ The transitory and terrible nature of worldly maya is defined in terms of a straw catching fire, a shadow of cloud, the passing fury of a sea-storm,³⁵ as or poisonous as a she-serpent.³⁶ The nature of egoistic man is compared to the poisonous snake and the life of saint is like the fragrance of chandan.³⁷ The fluctuating nature of mind is explained by the analogy of bird flying in the sky³⁸ and the transitoriness of life with the shadow of tree or with the clouds scattered by wind.³⁹ The abundance of joy in meeting with God is defined as the spring season⁴⁰ and the effect of company is defined by the imagery of stream losing itself in Ganga and by chandan which makes other trees fragrant.⁴¹ Similarly, being envious with the innocent

s explained as the cutting off the branch of the tree on which one sits, eats and enjoys.⁴² To inculcate divine love, the imagery of black-bee and chatrik is given.⁴³

The *Guru Granth Sahib* enunciates a close affinity of man with nature. Nature is defined as revealing symbol of God and not as an unconscious object alien to human existence and subject to be treated as merely a means for man's material well-being. The problem of ecology starts with the conflict between man and nature, when man tried to exploit nature for his selfish motives to satisfy his greed. Man's mastery over science and technology has resulted in artificial intervention in the process of nature and thus creating impediments in the smooth working of natural course.⁴⁴ Nature has its own laws of continuity and preservation; of maintenance, of unity and order of existence.⁴⁵ The sustenance of all living beings including man depends upon the natural environment. Therefore, disturbance in any component of the environment is likely to effect the whole eco-system. For the conservation of the eco-system, it is essential that the environment should be conserved. Man's intervention in the process of nature has resulted into pollution of elements viz., air, water and earth. The depletion of Ozone layer, acid rains, global warming have put the existence of man in danger. The economic development through industrialization at the cost of environment would lead to disaster. The nuclear energy has also affected the entire atmosphere. The use of artificial fertilizers and deforestation activities are aggravating the ecological imbalances, which will affect the whole climate and will lead to social instability and disharmony.

The *Guru Granth Sahib* stresses on the inner harmony of man which is prerequisite condition to create harmonious environment. Inner harmony, means the balance between the instinctive needs and the spiritual capacities or the integration of the lower self and the higher self. The lack of harmony between the inner and the outer also tends to create unstable equilibrium and leads to violence. On the contrary, everything appears blooming to the person who has attained inner harmony.⁴⁶ Man should rise from his self-centeredness to recognize a relationship of unity and harmony with the rest of creation.

Moral values should be the basis of progress. Does it not seem paradoxical that man with advanced mental skill, instead of serving

for the cause of humanity, is exploiting not only nature and animal species, but also to his fellow beings. If we objectively try to apprehend the benefits gained by advancement of technology we will find much more negative effects than the positive ones. The cause underlying this fact is lack of moral awareness, which not only pollutes man of his natural resources, but is also polluting the entire environment. To take an instance of genetic engineering which, no doubt, has proved a boon for the treatment of maladjusted organs, but the intention to redesign the living organism or the creation of animal and human cloning is devoid of ethical implications. The Sikh religion, in compliance with its ontological principle, repudiates such practices, which leads to interference in the way of God. They affect not only the inner harmony of nature by vanishing the biodiversity and creating imbalance in the existing eco-systems.

The Guru Granth Sahib advocates and recommends a balanced and moderate living⁴⁷ in harmony with the outward surroundings. Man should avoid the mixing of knowledge and technology with commercial motives. There should be sustainable economic development to sustain man at the reasonable comfort level, to conserve environment and its resources, to stop environmental degradation and this is possible by transcending oneself from self-centeredness and by developing cosmic consciousness. In this way, man visualizes order and harmony of nature by intuitive perception of divine presence in all being. This type of cosmic awareness is recommended in the holy scripture and this is ultimate end of philosophical ecology.

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